

On Top Of The News Email:news@arubatoday.com website: www.arubatoday.com Tel:+297 582-7800 Thursday, January 3, 2013

Small Victory

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House and a divided Congress can now move on to the next fiscal crisis after a last-minute deal to avert the "fiscal cliff" laid the foundation for more combustible struggles over taxes, spending and debt in the next few months. President Barack Obama's victory on taxes this week was the second, grudging round of a piecemeal battle in as many years over mountainous U.S. deficits. Despite the length and intensity of the debate, the deal to raise the top in-



President Barack Obama winks as he arrives to make a statement regarding the passage of the fiscal cliff bill in Washington.

(AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

come tax rate on families earning over \$450,000 a year — about 1 percent of households — and including only \$12 billion in spending cuts turned out to be a relatively easy vote for many members of Congress. This was particularly so because the alternative was to raise taxes on everyone.

But in banking \$620 billion in higher taxes over the coming decade from wealthier earners, Obama and his Republican rivals have barely touched deficits still expected to be in the \$650 billion range by the end of his second term.

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Outrage Over Delayed Vote



Rep. Peter King, R-N.Y., right, accompanied by fellow lawmakers, speak to reporters on Capitol Hill in Washington, Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2013, after a meeting with House Speaker John Boehner of Ohio, over the delayed vote on aid for the victims of Superstorm Sandy.

(AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

King: Boehner promises storm aid votes

WASHINGTON (AP) — The leader of the U.S. House of Representatives agreed Wednesday to a vote this week on aid for Superstorm Sandy recovery, changing course after coming under intense pressure from angry fellow Republicans.

The speaker will schedule a vote Friday for \$9 billion for the national flood insurance program and another on Jan. 15 for a remaining \$51 billion in the package, Republican Rep. Peter King of New York said after

emerging from a meeting with Boehner and Republican lawmakers from New York and New Jersey. The votes will be taken by the new Congress that will be sworn in Thursday.

Boehner's decision Tuesday night to cancel an expected vote on the storm aid before Congress ends its current session had provoked a firestorm of criticism from New York, New Jersey and adjacent states, including many lawmakers in his own party.

According to King, Boehner explained that after the contentious vote this week to avoid major tax increases and spending cuts called the "fiscal cliff,"

Boehner didn't think it was the right time to schedule the vote before the current Congress went out of business.

King left the session with Boehner without the anger that led him to lash out at the speaker Tuesday night. "What's done is done. The end result will be New York,

New Jersey and Connecticut will receive the funding they deserve. We made our position clear last night. That's in the past," King said.

Sandy was blamed for at least 120 deaths and battered coastline areas from North Carolina to Maine in October. New York, New Jersey and Connecticut were the hardest hit states and suffered high winds, flooding and storm surges.

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American journalist missing in Syria

BEN HUBBARD

Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — An American journalist who graduated from Marquette University has been missing in Syria since he was kidnapped more than one month ago, his family said Wednesday, less than two years after he was held by government forces in Libya while covering that country's civil war. The family of James Foley, of Rochester, N.H., said he was kidnapped in northwest Syria by unknown gunmen on Thanksgiving day. Foley, 39, has worked in a number of conflict zones around the Middle East, including Syria, Libya and Iraq. He was contributing videos to Agence France-Press while in Syria. Foley graduated from Marquette in 1996, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reported. Foley's disappearance highlights the risks to reporters seeking to cover the civil war from inside Syria.

The Syrian government rarely gives visas to journalists and often limits the movements of those it allows in. This has prompted a number of reporters to sneak into the country with the rebels fighting to topple President Bashar Assad. Some have been killed or wounded while others have disappeared.

Foley and another journalist were working in the northern province of Idlib when they were kidnapped near the village of Taftanaz on November 22. He had entered Syria a short time earlier.

lier.

Media outlets refrained from reporting on Foley's kidnapping until his family released its statement. The other reporter's family has requested that that reporter's name not be made public. Foley's family said they have not heard from him since.

contact us so we can work together toward his release."

The Chairman of Agence France-Press, Emmanuel Hoog, said in a statement that the news agency was doing all it could to get Foley released.

"James is a professional journalist who has remained totally neutral in



This photo posted on the website freejamesfoley.org shows journalist James Foley in Aleppo, Syria, in July, 2012. The family of an American journalist says he went missing in Syria more than one month ago while covering the civil war there. A statement released online Wednesday by the family of James Foley said he was kidnapped in northwest Syria by unknown gunmen on Thanksgiving day.

(AP Photo/Nicole Tung)

"We want Jim to come safely home, or at least we need to speak with him to know he's OK," said his father, John Foley, in the online statement. "Jim is an objective journalist and we appeal for the release of Jim unharmed. To the people who have Jim, please

this conflict," Hoog said. "His captors, whoever they may be, must release him immediately."

In April 2011, Foley and two other reporters were detained by government forces in Libya while covering that country's civil war. □

C. African Republic faces rebel push

KRISTA LARSON

Associated Press

DAMARA, Central African Republic (AP) — More than 30 truckloads of troops from Chad line the two-lane highway just outside of Damara, supporting Central African Republic government forces who want to block a new rebel coalition from reaching the capital. In a display of force, the turbaned fighters hold their rocket-propelled grenades and other weapons they threaten to use if the rebels

seeking to oust President Francois Bozize push this far south.

Gen. Jean Felix Akaga, who heads the regional force known as FOMAC, says a push on Damara, just 75 kilometers (45 miles) north of the capital, would be "a declaration of war" on the 10 Central African states.

"For us, Damara is the red line that the rebels cannot cross," Akaga said Wednesday. "If they attack Damara, we will attack." □

The United Nations called for talks between the government and rebels and the Security Council scheduled closed consultations on the Central African Republic on Thursday afternoon.

The multinational force brought journalists up to Damara, where they touted the strength of the Chadian troops, who along with forces from Republic of Congo and Gabon are helping to stabilize the area. □

AROUND THE WORLD

2 shoot at police station, die in chase

ROSTOV-ON-DON, Russia (AP) — A Russian police spokesman says two attackers opened fire on a police station in the country's restive Caucasus region and were killed in a subsequent chase. Vladimir Zaitzev of the regional Interior Ministry says the attack took place Wednesday in Uchkeken, a village in the republic of Karachayev-Cherkessiya. The gunmen fired on the station with an automatic rifle, then sped away in an automobile. The attackers' car ran into a tree and they opened fire on police when they emerged. Police returned fire and killed both, Zaitzev said. Caucasus provinces have been shaken for years by violence attributed to Islamic insurgents. □

Malala's father given diplomatic post

LONDON (AP) — The father of a teenage Pakistani shot in the head by Taliban for advocating girls' education has been given a diplomatic post in the U.K. Malala Yousafzai has been recovering at a hospital in Birmingham, England, after she was shot in October in Pakistan. The Taliban have vowed to target her again. Pakistan's High Commissioner to Britain, Wajid Shamsul Hasan, confirmed a BBC report Wednesday saying that Malala's father, Ziauddin, has been appointed Pakistan's education attaché in Birmingham. The position virtually guarantees Malala will remain in the U.K. Malala's case won recognition for the struggle for women's rights in Pakistan. □

Gang rape suspect may be a juvenile

NEW DELHI (AP) — A bone test is being conducted to confirm the age of a young suspect in custody in the fatal assault and gang rape of a woman on a bus in India's capital, while prosecutors will seek the death penalty for five other men arrested with him, police said. The six will be charged in court on Thursday on accusations that they kidnapped, gang raped and murdered the 23-year-old woman in New Delhi on Dec. 16, police spokesman Rajan Bhagat said. Media reports say some 30 witnesses have been gathered, and the charges have been detailed in more than 1,000 pages. Indians have been demanding the death penalty for the six men. □

Low-cost film setting records in China

BEIJING (AP) — A low-budget, domestically produced comedy has unexpectedly become the highest-grossing Chinese film to date. Chinese state media say the wacky road movie "Lost in Thailand" has grossed more than 1 billion yuan (\$160 million) since its Dec. 12 debut. The official Xinhua News Agency, citing an independent monitor of box office figures, said Wednesday that it also beat James Cameron's "Titanic" in 3-D, the most popular foreign film in 2012, in Chinese theaters. Set in Thailand, the film tells the story of two businessmen who go searching for their boss in the north, and then link up with a tourist eager to explore the country. □

Thieves burglarize flagship Apple hub

PARIS (AP) — Masked and armed thieves used the New Year's Eve fete to rob the flagship Apple store in Paris. The French press reported that up to €1 million (\$1.3 million) in goods were stolen at the store selling products such as Apple's iPhones and iPads behind the Paris Opera house, a figure police would not confirm. Police said Tuesday the theft occurred about 9 p.m. Monday, 3 hours after closing, while police were deployed around the famed Champs-Elysees Avenue where revelers traditionally gather on New Year's Eve. □



Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, center, is transported through the New York Presbyterian Hospital complex Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2013, in New York.

(AP Photo/Frank Franklin II)

Clinton leaves hospital after treatment for clot

JOSH LEDERMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton was released from a New York hospital on Wednesday, three days after doctors discovered a blood clot in her head.

Clinton's medical team advised her that she was making good progress on all fronts and said they are confident she will fully recover, said Clinton spokesman Philippe Reines. Doctors had been treating Clinton with blood thinners to dissolve a clot in a vein that runs through the space between the brain and the skull behind the right ear. "She's eager to get back to the office," Reines said in a statement, adding that the secretary and her family are grateful for the excellent care she received at New York-Presbyterian Hospital.

Reines said details of when Clinton will return to work will be clarified in the coming days.

Clinton had been in the hospital since Sunday, when doctors discovered the clot on an MRI test during a follow-up exam stemming from a concussion she suffered earlier in December. While at home battling a stomach virus, Clinton had fainted, fallen and struck her head, a spokesman said.

"Grateful my Mom discharged from the hospital and is heading home," the secretary's daughter, Chelsea, wrote on Twitter. "Even more grateful her medical

team (is) confident she'll make a full recovery."

Earlier Wednesday, the State Department said Clinton had been speaking by telephone with staff in Washington and reviewing paperwork while in the hospital.

"She's been quite active on the phone with all of us," said State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland. Before being released from the hospital, Clinton was photographed Wednesday getting into a black van with her husband, Bill, Chelsea and a security contingent to be taken elsewhere on the sprawling hospital campus. The last time Clinton had been seen publicly was on Dec. 7.

Clinton's physicians had said Monday that there was no neurological damage but that they planned to keep her in the hospital while they established the proper dose for the blood thinners. They said Clinton, 65, had been in good spirits and was engaging with doctors, family and aides. Sidelined by her illness for most of December, Clinton was forced to cancel scheduled testimony before Congress about a scathing report into the attack on the U.S. diplomatic mission in Benghazi, Libya, and was absent on Dec. 21 when President Barack Obama nominated Sen. John Kerry to succeed her when she steps down at the start of Obama's second term, as had long been planned. □

King: Boehner promises storm aid votes

Continued from front

It was the most costly natural disaster since Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans in 2005 and one of the worst storms ever in the Northeast.

"Getting critical aid to the victims of Hurricane Sandy should be the first priority in the new Congress, and that was reaffirmed today with members of the New

cizing Boehner before the speaker changed course. Christie said he was frustrated after Boehner withdrew the bill Tuesday night and tried to call him four times that night, but none of the calls were returned. Christie complained about the "toxic internal politics" of the House majority. Christie said he had worked hard to persuade House members to support Sandy aid,

conservative lawmakers who want to offset any increase in spending and Northeast and mid-Atlantic lawmakers determined to help their states recover more than two months after the storm hit.

The criticism of Boehner on the House floor was personal at times, and reflected in part the frustration among rank-and-file over the decision to press ahead with a



Gov. Chris Christie speaks at a news conference at New Jersey's State House on Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2013, in Trenton, N.J. Christie blasted fellow Republican John Boehner for the House Speaker's decision Tuesday to delay a vote on Superstorm Sandy relief and says the inaction is "inexcusable." Republican

(AP Photo/Tim Larsen)

York and New Jersey delegations," Boehner said in a joint statement with House Majority Leader Eric Cantor.

King said Boehner assured the lawmakers present that the money from the two House votes would roughly equal the \$60 billion package of aid that passed the Senate on Friday.

The House Appropriations Committee has drafted a smaller, \$27 billion measure for immediate recovery needs and a second amendment for \$33 billion to meet longer-term needs. The \$9 billion in flood insurance money to be voted on Friday was originally in the \$27 billion measure. The votes on Jan. 15 will be for \$18 billion in immediate assistance and \$33 billion for longer-term projects, including projects to protect against future storms, King said.

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, a Republican, was among those sharply criti-

and was given assurances by Republican leaders that the bill would be voted on before Thursday.

"There is no reason for me at the moment to believe anything they tell me," Christie said before Boehner announced there would be votes this month. Christie and New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, a Democrat, issued a joint statement, saying, "The fact that days continue to go by while people suffer, families are out of their homes, and men and women remain jobless and struggling during these harsh winter months is a dereliction of duty."

King was among an angry chorus of New York and New Jersey lawmakers from both parties who blasted Boehner. He had branded Boehner's initial decision to pull the bill a "cruel knife in the back" to New York and New Jersey. In considering the Sandy aid package, the speaker was caught between con-

vote on the "fiscal cliff deal. Boehner had been struggling with conservatives who complained that the economic package didn't include enough spending cuts.

Reps. Michael Grimm, a Republican, and Jerrold Nadler, a Democrat, said in angry House floor remarks that while they did not agree on much, Boehner's decision amounted to a "betrayal" and a crushing blow to states battered by the storm.

Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, a New York Democrat, raised the political temperature even more.

She said Boehner should explain his decision to families whose homes and businesses were destroyed, and added: "But I doubt he has the dignity nor the guts to do it." President Barack Obama called for House Republicans to vote on the Sandy aid "without delay for our fellow Americans." □

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With 'cliff' averted, on to the next fiscal crisis

Continued from front

And those calculations assume policymakers can find more than \$1 trillion over 10 years to replace automatic across-the-board spending cuts known as a sequester. "They didn't do any of the tough stuff," said Erskine Bowles, chairman a 2010 deficit commission. "We've taken two steps now, but those two steps combined aren't enough to put our fiscal house in order."

In 2011, the government adopted tighter caps on day-to-day operating budgets of the Pentagon and other Cabinet agencies to save \$1.1 trillion over 10 years.

The measure passed Tuesday prevents automatic tax hikes for everyone but higher-income earners. It also blocks severe across-the-board spending cuts for two months, extends unemployment benefits for the long-term jobless for a year, stops a 27 percent cut in fees paid to doctors treating patients under the Medicare program for the elderly, and prevents a possible doubling of milk prices.

The alternative was going over the cliff, an economy-punching half-trillion-dollar combination of sweeping tax increases and spending cuts. Despite the deal, the government partially went over the brink anyway with the expiration of a two-year cut in payroll taxes for the Social Security pension program.

Action inside a dysfunctional Washington now only comes with binding deadlines. So, naturally, this week's hard-fought bargain sets up another crisis in

this as an opportunity to leverage more spending cuts from Obama, just like they did in the summer of 2011. House of Representatives Speaker John Boeh-

bate over the debt limit. The cliff compromise represented the first time since 1990 that Republicans condoned a tax increase. That has whipped up a fury

benefit formulas — as a scalp, and they're dead set against raising more revenues through anything less than an overhaul of the tax code now that Obama has won higher taxes on the wealthy.

"Now the focus turns to spending," Boehner said after Tuesday's vote, promising that future budget battles will center on "significant spending cuts and reforms to the entitlement programs that are driving our country deeper and deeper into debt."

Obama is just as adamant on the other side, saying higher revenues have to be part of any formula for further diverting the automatic spending cuts.

The refusal of Republicans to consider additional new taxes is sure to stir up resistance among Democrats when they're asked to consider politically painful cuts to so-called entitlement programs like Medicare. Democratic protests led Obama and Boehner to take a proposal to increase the Medicare eligibility age off the table in the recent round of talks.

The upshot? More scorched-earth politics on the budget will probably dominate the initial few months of Obama's second term, when the president would prefer to focus on legacy accomplishments like fixing the immigration problem and implementing his overhaul of health care. □



Speaker of the House John Boehner, R-Ohio, and Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers, R-Wash., right, at the House of Representatives at the Capitol in Washington.

(AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite)

two months, when painful across-the-board spending cuts to the Pentagon and domestic programs are set to kick in and the government runs out of the ability to juggle its \$16.4 trillion debt without having to borrow more money. Unless Congress increases or allows Obama to increase that borrowing cap, the government risks a first-ever default on U.S. obligations. Republicans will use

ner, the top Republican in Washington, vows that any increase in the debt limit — which needs to be enacted by Congress by the end of February or sometime in March — must be accompanied by an equal amount in cuts to federal spending. That puts him on yet another collision course with Obama, who has vowed anew that he won't let haggling over spending cuts complicate the de-

among lawmakers from the conservative tea party movement and increased the pressure on Boehner to adopt a hard line in coming confrontations over the borrowing cap and the spending cuts that won only a two-month reprieve in this week's deal. Put simply, House Republicans are demanding new spending cuts — possibly through changes in Social Security and Medicare

Critics: grounding shows Arctic drilling danger



This aerial image provided by the U.S. Coast Guard shows the Royal Dutch Shell drilling rig Kulluk aground off a small island near Kodiak Island Tuesday, Jan. 1, 2013. No leak has been seen from the drilling ship that grounded off the island during a storm, officials said, as opponents criticized the growing race to explore the Arctic for energy resources.

(AP Photo/U.S. Coast Guard)

DAN JOLING

Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)

— The grounding of a petroleum drilling ship on a remote Alaska Island has refueled the debate about oil exploration in the U.S. Arctic Ocean, where critics for years have said the conditions are too harsh and the stakes too high to allow dangerous industrial development.

The drilling sites are 1,000 miles (1,600 kilometers) from Coast Guard resources, and environmentalists argue offshore drilling in the Arctic's fragile ecosystem is too risky. So when a Royal Dutch Shell PLC ship went aground on New Year's Eve off an uninhabited island in the Gulf of Alaska, they pounced — saying the incident foreshadowed what will happen north of the Bering Strait if drilling is allowed.

For oil giant Shell, which leads the way in drilling in the frontier waters of the U.S. Arctic, a spokesman said the incident will be a learning experience in the company's years-long effort to draw oil from beneath the ocean floor, which it maintains it can do safely. Though no wells yet exist, Shell has invested billions of dollars gearing up for drilling in the Beaufort and the Chukchi seas, off Alaska's

north and northwest coast. The potential bounty is high: the U.S. Geological Survey estimates 26.6 billion barrels of recoverable oil and 130 trillion cubic feet (3.68 trillion cubic meters) of natural gas exist in Arctic waters. Environmentalists note the Beaufort and the Chukchi seas are some of the world's most wild and remote ecosystems on the planet. They're also some of the most fragile, supporting polar bears, the ice seals they feed on, walrus, endangered whales and other marine mammals that Alaska Natives depend on for their subsistence culture.

"The Arctic is just far different than the Gulf of Alaska or even other places on earth," said Marilyn Heiman, U.S. Arctic director for the Pew Environment Group.

Royal Dutch Shell PLC in 2008 spent \$2.1 billion on Chukchi Sea leases and estimates it has spent nearly \$5 billion gearing up for drilling there and in the Beaufort. Shell Alaska spokesman Curtis Smith said the company has a long, successful history of working offshore in Alaska and is confident it can build another multidecade business in the Arctic.

"Our success here is not by accident," Smith said.

"We know how to work in regions like this. Having said that, when flawless execution does not happen, you learn from it, and we will." The drill ship that operated in the Beaufort Sea, the Kulluk, a circular barge with a funnel-shape hull and no propulsion system, ran aground this week on Sitkalidak Island.

The ship had left Dutch Harbor in the Aleutian Island under tow behind the 360-foot (110-meter) anchor handler Aiviq on Dec. 22. It was making its way to a Pacific Northwest shipyard for maintenance and upgrades when it ran into a vicious storm — a fairly routine winter event for Alaska waters.

The tow line snapped Dec. 27. Shell vessels and the Coast Guard reattached tow lines at least four times. High wind and seas that approached 50 feet (15 meters) frustrated efforts to control the rig, and it ran aground. Shell, the drill ship operators and transit experts, and the Coast Guard are planning the salvage operation. The state of Alaska has been an enthusiastic supporter of Arctic offshore drilling. More than 90 percent of its general fund revenue comes from oil earnings. However, the trans-Alaska pipeline has been running at less than one-third capacity as reserves diminish in North Slope fields. □

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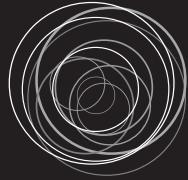
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US sperm donor fights request to pay child support

JOHN HANNA

Associated Press

TOPEKA, Kansas (AP) — A U.S. man who donated sperm to a lesbian couple after answering an online ad is fighting efforts by Kansas state authorities to suddenly force him to pay child support for the now 3-year-old girl, arguing that he and the women signed an agreement waiving all of his parental rights.

The case hinges on the fact that no doctors were used for the artificial insemination. The state argues that because William Marotta didn't work through a clinic or doctor, as required by state law, he can be held responsible for about \$6,000 that the child's biological mother received through public assistance — as well as future child support.

Angela de Rocha, spokeswoman for the Kansas Department for Children and Families, said that when a single mother seeks benefits for a child, it's routine for the department to try to determine the child's pa-

ternity and require the father to make support payments to lessen the potential cost to taxpayers.

Marotta, a 46-year-old Topeka resident, answered an online ad in 2009 from a

But instead of working with a doctor, Marotta agreed to drop off a container with his sperm at the couple's home and the women successfully handled the artificial insemination them-



William Marotta, who is being asked by the state of Kansas to pay child support after providing sperm to a same-sex couple, speaks about his ordeal at his attorney's office in Topeka, Kan.

(AP Photo/Jeff Davis)

local couple, Angela Bauer and Jennifer Schreiner, who said they were seeking a sperm donor. After exchanging emails and meeting, the three signed an agreement relieving Marotta of any financial or paternal responsibility.

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a court petition against Marotta in October, asking that he be required to reimburse the state for the benefits and make future child support payments. Marotta is asking that the case be dismissed, arguing that he's not legally the child's father, only a sperm donor.

A hearing is set for Tuesday. Marotta told The Topeka-Capital Journal that he is "a little scared about where this is going to go, primarily for financial reasons." His attorney didn't immediately return a phone message Wednesday from The Associated Press.

His attorney didn't immediately return a phone message Wednesday from The Associated Press, and there was no listing for his home phone number in Topeka.

Listings for Schreiner and Bauer were either incorrect or out of service, and Schreiner did not respond to a message sent by Facebook. Court records show that Marotta, Schreiner and Bauer signed an agreement in March 2009, with the women agreeing to

"hold him harmless" financially. The agreement also said the child's birth certificate would not list a father. But the state contends the agreement isn't valid because a doctor wasn't involved.

Under a 1994 Kansas law, a sperm donor isn't considered the father only when a donor provides sperm to a licensed physician for artificial insemination of a woman who isn't the donor's wife. The result is an incentive for donors and prospective mothers to work with a doctor, de Rocha said.

"I believe that is the intent of the law, so that we don't end up with these ambiguous situations," she told The Associated Press.

Also, the Kansas Supreme Court ruled in October 2007 that a sperm donor who works through a licensed physician can't legally be considered a child's father — and doesn't have the right to visit the child or have a role in its upbringing — absent a formal, written agreement. □

US Judge rules targeted killing memo can remain secret

ADAM LIPTAK

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WASHINGTON — A federal judge in Manhattan refused Wednesday to require the Justice Department to disclose a memorandum providing the legal justification for the targeted killing of a U.S. citizen, Anwar al-Awlaki, who died in a drone strike in Yemen in 2011.

The ruling, by Judge Colleen McMahon, was marked by skepticism about the anti-terrorist program that targeted him, and frustration with her own role in keeping the legal rationale for it secret. "I can find no way

around the thicket of laws and precedents that effectively allow the executive branch of our government to proclaim as perfectly lawful certain actions that seem on their face incompatible with our Constitution and laws while keeping the reasons for their conclusion a secret," she wrote.

A lawsuit for the memorandum and related materials was filed under the Freedom of Information Act by The New York Times and two of its reporters, Charlie Savage and Scott Shane. Wednesday's decision also rejected a broader re-

quest under the act from the American Civil Liberties Union. David E. McCraw, a lawyer for The Times, said the paper would appeal.

"We began this litigation because we believed our readers deserved to know more about the U.S. government's legal position on the use of targeted killings against persons having ties to terrorism, including U.S. citizens," McCraw said. Jameel Jaffer, a lawyer with the ACLU, said his group also planned to appeal. A Justice Department spokesman said only that lawyers there were reviewing the

decision. McMahon's opinion included an overview of what she called "an extensive public relations campaign" by various government officials about the U.S. role in the killing of al-Awlaki and the circumstances under which the government considers targeted killings, including of its citizens, to be lawful. The Times and the ACLU argued that the government had waived the right to withhold its legal rationale by discussing the program extensively in public.

The government's public comments were as a

whole "cryptic and imprecise," McMahon said, and were thus insufficient to overcome exemptions in the freedom of information law for classified materials and internal government deliberations. McMahon said she had not reviewed the withheld documents, including the one at the heart of the case, which was prepared by the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel. The Times published an account of the Office of Legal Counsel memorandum in October 2011, citing people who had read it. □

Q&A ON THE NEWS

Q: Guards at the Auschwitz concentration camp have been tried and convicted for their crimes. Were any of the prisoners who assisted the Nazis ever tried?

-- Fred Rosas, Lawrenceville, Ga.

A: There were several trials in the 1950s-60s involving Jewish prisoners who collaborated with their German captors, a spokeswoman with Jerusalem's Yad Vashem, which describes itself as the "World Center for Holocaust Research, Education, Documentation and Commemoration," told Q-and-A on the News in an email. Auschwitz kapos -- including Emil Bednarek, Josef Windeck and Bernhard Bonitz -- were convicted of many crimes, including murder, in the Frankfurt Auschwitz Trials in the 1960s. Bednarek was sentenced to life imprisonment after being found guilty of 14 counts of murder. Windeck and Bonitz also received life sentences.

Kapos are described by the Jewish Virtual Library as "trustee inmates who supervised the prisoners. ... These trustees carried out the will of the Nazi camp commandants and guards, and were often as brutal as their SS counterparts."

An article titled "Punishing International Crimes Committed by the Persecuted: The Kapo Trials in Israel (1950s-1960s)," published in the Journal of International Criminal Justice in March 2006, states there were about 40 trials of kapos from 1951-64.

Q: Gas prices are under \$3 a gallon in some places, but why is diesel still at last summer's prices?

-- John Dollar, Smyrna, Ga.

A: Diesel fuel has been more expensive than gas since September 2004, because of international demand for diesel and other distillate fuel oils, among other reasons, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration. Diesel production and distribution have been cut in the transition to "less polluting, lower-sulfur diesel

fuels" in the U.S., and the federal excise tax for "on-highway diesel fuel" is at 24.4 cents a gallon, or 6 cents higher than the gas tax, according to eia.gov.

Q: If you're on Social Security and move out of the country, can you still draw it? Are you still entitled to it?

-- Eddie Webster, Dallas, Ga.

A: U.S. citizens can travel or live in most foreign countries without affecting their eligibility for Social Security benefits, a spokeswoman told Q-and-A on the News in an email. If you aren't a U.S. citizen, your payments will be stopped after you have been outside the country for six consecutive months, according to law, unless you meet one of "several exceptions in the law, allowing your benefits to continue," she wrote.

"Most of these exceptions are based on your country of citizenship, residence or on other conditions." For more information about receiving benefits abroad, including to which countries payments can be sent, reporting responsibilities and taxes, read "Your Payments While You are Outside the United States" at www.socialsecurity.gov.

Q: A recent article about Pepsi stated that Diet Coke still uses only aspartame. Didn't Coca-Cola begin using Splenda in the past few years?

-- Lance DeLoach, Thomaston, Ga.

A: Coca-Cola began selling Diet Coke with the sugar substitute Splenda in 2005, in conjunction with its regular Diet Coke line, which is flavored with aspartame.

It's packaged differently than regular Diet Coke, with the words "Sweetened with Splenda" on the label with the Splenda logo.

It's more difficult to find because the demand isn't as high, a Coca-Cola spokeswoman told Q-and-A on the News. □

Newtown students get a new school

DAVE COLLINS

Associated Press

MONROE, Connecticut

(AP) — The children who escaped last month's shootings at a Connecticut elementary school will be returning to classes in a neighboring town in a refurbished school now named after their old one, school officials said Wednesday. Newtown Superintendent of Schools Janet Robinson announced that the students' new school, the former Chalk Hill Middle School in Monroe, has been renamed Sandy Hook Elementary School. She said the Sandy Hook staff made that decision.

It's been nearly three weeks since the Dec. 14 massacre, when gunman Adam Lanza killed 20 students and six educators. Lanza also killed his mother at the home they shared in Newtown before the school shootings, which ended when Lanza fatally shot himself as police arrived.

Police haven't released any details about a motive. Numerous police officers on Wednesday guarded the outside of the Monroe school, which is about 7 miles (11 kilometers) from the old school, and told reporters to stay away.

Asked about the level of security at the new school,

for anyone who needs them.

"They're so excited to see the teachers," Robinson said about the open house attendees.

Several signs welcoming the Sandy Hook students to their new school were posted along the road leading to the school in a rural, mostly residential neighborhood. One said "Welcome Sandy Hook Elementary Kids," while a similar sign added "You are in our prayers."

Donna Page, a retired Sandy Hook principal, will lead the new school.

Teams of workers, many of them volunteers, prepared



Children board a bus on the first day of classes after the holiday break, in Newtown, Conn., Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2013. Nearly three weeks after the shooting rampage at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, students and teachers from the school will return to class Thursday in the neighboring town of Monroe.

(AP Photo/Jessica Hill)

"That's who they are. They're the Sandy Hook family," Robinson said after a news conference at a park in Monroe a few miles (kilometers) from the school, which will open for classes Thursday morning. An open house was held for parents and students on Wednesday.

Robinson added that renaming the Chalk Hill school will allow staff and students to keep "their identity and a comfort level."

The school where the shootings occurred remains closed and guarded by police. Newtown officials haven't decided yet on the building's future.

Monroe police Lt. Keith White said, "I think right now it has to be the safest school in America."

Newtown Police Chief Michael Kehoe declined to answer questions Wednesday about the investigation.

Teachers attended staff meetings at the new school on Wednesday morning and were visited by Gov. Dannel P. Malloy before the open house, White said. Robinson said Chalk Hill School has been transformed into a "cheerful" place for the surviving students to resume normal school routines. She said mental health counselors continue to be available

the Chalk Hill school with fresh paint and new furniture and even raised bathroom floors so the smaller elementary school students can reach the toilets. The students' desks, backpacks and other belongings that were left behind following the shooting were taken to the new school to make them feel at home.

Counselors say it's important for children to get back to a normal routine and for teachers and parents to offer sensitive reassurances.

When classes start, Robinson said teachers will try to make it as normal a school day as possible for the children. □

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showed incinerated victims — one still sitting astride a motorcycle — or bodies torn apart. "He's burning! The guy is



A Syrian rebel plays football in the Saif al-Dawlah neighborhood of Aleppo, Syria, Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2013. The United Nations estimated Wednesday that more than 60,000 people have been killed in Syria's 21-month-old uprising against authoritarian rule, a toll one-third higher than what anti-regime activists had counted. (AP Photo/Andoni Lubacki)

burning!" an off-camera voice screamed in one video over a flaming

corpse. It was unclear if the government had a military strategy for attacking the gas station. At least one of the

wounded wore a military-style vest often used by rebel fighters. Human rights

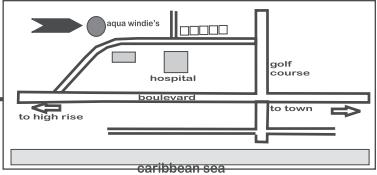
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UN says more than 60,000 dead in Syrian civil war

BEN HUBBARD**FRANK JORDANS****Associated Press****BEIRUT (AP)** — The United Nations gave a grim new count

Wednesday of the human cost of Syria's civil war, saying the death toll has exceeded 60,000 in 21 months — far higher than recent estimates by anti-regime activists.

The day's events illustrated the escalating violence that has made recent months the deadliest of the conflict: As rebels pressed a strategy of attacking airports and pushing the fight closer to President Bashar Assad's stronghold in Damascus, the government responded with deadly airstrikes on restive areas around the capital.

A missile from a fighter jet hit a gas station in the suburb of Mleiha, killing or wounding dozens of people who were trapped in burning piles of debris, activists said.

Gruesome online video

showed incinerated victims — one still sitting astride a motorcycle — or bodies torn apart. "He's burning! The guy is

groups and anti-regime activists say Assad's forces often make little effort to avoid civilian casualties when bombing rebel areas.

Syria's conflict began in March 2011 with protests calling for political change but has evolved into a full-scale civil war.

As the rebels have grown more organized and effective, seizing territory in the north and establishing footholds around Damascus, the government has stepped up its use of airpower, launching daily airstrikes. The escalating violence has sent the death toll soaring.

The U.N.'s new count of more than 60,000 deaths since the start of the conflict is a third higher than recent estimates by anti-regime activists. One group, the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Hu-

man Rights, says more than 45,000 people have been killed. Other groups have given similar tolls.

"The number of casualties is much higher than we expected, and is truly shocking," U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay said in a statement.

She criticized the government for inflaming the conflict by cracking down on peaceful protests and said rebel groups, too, have killed unjustifiably. Acts by both sides could be considered war crimes, she said.

She also faulted world powers for not finding a way to stop the violence.

"The failure of the international community, in particular the Security Council, to take concrete actions to stop the bloodletting shames us all," Pillay said. "Collectively, we have fiddled at the edges while Syria burns." □

Egypt panel implicates Mubarak, military in deaths

SARAH EL DEEB**Associated Press****CAIRO (AP)** — An Egyptian fact-finding mission determined that Hosni Mubarak watched the uprising against him unfold through a live TV feed at his palace, despite his later denial that he knew the extent of the protests and crackdown against them, a member of the mission said Wednesday.

The mission's findings increase

pressure for a retrial of the 84-year old ousted president, who is already serving a life sentence for the deaths of 900 protesters. But its report could hold both political gains and dangers for his successor, Mohammed Morsi. A new prosecution of Mubarak would be popular, since many Egyptians were angered that he was convicted only for failing to

stop the killing of protesters, rather than for ordering the crackdown.

But the report also implicates the military and security officials in protester deaths. Any move to prosecute them could spark a backlash from powerful generals and others who still hold positions under Morsi's government.

Rights activists said they would watch carefully how aggressively Morsi pursues the evidence, detailed by a fact-finding mission he commissioned.

"This report should be part of the democratic transformation of Egypt and restructuring of security agencies," Ahmed Ragheb, a member of the commission and a rights lawyer, told The Associated Press. "At

the end of the day, there will be no national reconciliation without revealing the truth, and ensuring accountability."

Morsi, an Islamist from the Muslim Brotherhood, asked the commission to send the report to the chief prosecutor Talaat Abdullah to investigate new evidence, his office said Wednesday.

Morsi recently appointed Abdullah to replace a Mubarak holdover who many considered an obstacle to strongly prosecuting former regime officials. Some judges criticized the appointment as a political move to continue to wield leverage over the prosecutor post. The case will be a test whether Abdullah will

conduct a thorough process of holding officials responsible. Some rights activists were already disappointed that Morsi didn't empower the fact-finding commission itself to turn the investigations into prosecutions and avoid political influence.

The 700-page report on protester deaths the past two years was submitted Wednesday to Morsi by the commission, made up of judges, rights lawyers, and representatives from the Interior Ministry and the intelligence, as well as families of victims. Morsi formed the commission soon after coming to office in June as Egypt's first freely elected president after campaign promises to order retrials of former regime figures if new evidence was revealed. □

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Pope convinced of peace in 2013 despite world woes

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Benedict XVI said this week he is convinced that peace will prevail in 2013, despite the inequality, terrorism and "unregulated financial capitalism" that afflict the world today.

Benedict celebrated a New Year's Day Mass in St. Peter's Basilica to mark the church's world day of peace. His target audience was in the front pews: diplomats accredited to the Holy See, who next week will attend the pope's annual address about the



Pope Benedict XVI is greeted by bishops as he arrives for his weekly general audience in the Paul IV hall at the Vatican, Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2013.

(AP Photo/Andrew Medichini)

plight of the world's poor and its war-torn regions.

In his homily, Benedict said that despite today's terrorism, criminality and the inequality between rich and poor, he is convinced the "numerous works of peace, of which the world is rich, are testimony to the innate vocation of humanity to peace."

He cited "unregulated financial capitalism" as evidence of an "egotistical and individualistic mentality" that is rife in the world.

Later, Benedict appeared at his studio window overlooking St. Peter's Square to wish the crowds below a Happy New Year.

Nearby, a man scaled the scaffolding along the colonnade surrounding the square and draped a banner calling on Benedict to "Stop Terrorism."

After a few hours of police negotiations, he came down and was escorted away.

The protest didn't appear to cause the pope any disturbance. □

Ivory Coast stampede survivors blame barricades

INZA BAKAYOKO
Associated Press

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast (AP) — Survivors of a stampede in Ivory Coast that killed 61 people, most of them children and teenagers, after a New Year's Eve fireworks display said Wednesday that makeshift barricades stopped them from moving along a main boulevard, causing the crush of people. Ivory Coast police said unknown people put tree trunks across the Boulevard de la Republique where the trampling took place.

"For security, because there were so many important people at the event, we closed certain main streets," said a police officer who was overheard briefing Ivory Coast President Alassane Outtara on the incident. The police officer said the tree trunks were put out unofficially by people who are not known. "After the fireworks we reopened the other streets, but we had not yet removed the tree trunks from the Boulevard de la Republique, in front of the Hotel Tiana near the National Assembly (parliament) build-

ing," she said. "That is where the stampede happened when people flooded in from the other streets."

Ouattara ordered three days of national mourning and launched an investigation into the causes of the tragedy. Two survivors, in interviews with The Associated Press, indicated why so many died in what would normally be an open area, the Boulevard de la Republique. An estimated 50,000 people had gathered near the Felix Houphouet Boigny Stadium and elsewhere in Abidjan's Plateau district to watch the fireworks. As they streamed away from the show some encountered the blockades.

"Near the Justice Palace we were stopped by some people who put blockades of wood in the street," 33-year-old Zoure Sanate said from her bed in Cocody Hospital. "They told us we must stay in the Plateau area until morning. None of us accepted to stay in Plateau until the morning for a celebration that ended at around 1 a.m."

"Then came the stampede of people behind

us," she said. "My four children and I were knocked to the ground. I was hearing my kids calling me, but I was powerless and fighting against death. Two of my kids are in hospital with me, but two others are missing. They cannot be found."

Another hospital patient, Brahma Compaore, 39, said he also was caught in the pile of people stopped by the roadblock.

"I found myself on the ground and people were

walking on me," said Compaore. "I was only saved by people who pulled me onto the sidewalk."

Local newspapers are speculating that thieves put up the roadblocks so that pickpockets could steal money and mobile phones from the packed-in people. Ouattara pledged to get answers. Some observers wondered why police did not prevent the tragedy.

"The investigation must take into account all the

testimonies of victims," he said Wednesday. "We will have a crisis center to share and receive information."

Ouattara also postponed the traditional New Year's receptions at his residence, which had been scheduled for Thursday and Friday. The leader of a human rights organization said that deadly incidents were predictable because the police and civil authorities had not taken adequate protective measures.

"The situation is deplorable," said Thierry Legre, president of the Ivorian League of Human Rights. "It is our first tragedy of 2013 but in 2012 we could already see possibility of such a tragedy because there are not adequate authorities patrolling our roads and waters."

Legre said the New Year's stampede "exposes our weak and dysfunctional civil protection system. This must be corrected immediately. The government cannot invite people to this kind of public gathering without taking adequate precautions to protect their safety and their lives." □



Relative of a new year's eve stampede victims wait outside the morgue in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, Wednesday Jan. 2, 2013, in an attempt to get the bodies of their family members. Survivors of a stampede in Ivory Coast that killed 61 people said Wednesday that barricades stopped them from moving along a main boulevard, causing the crush of people.

(AP Photo/Emanuel Ekra)

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Venezuela opposition says Chavez secrecy feeds rumors

IAN JAMES
Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)

Venezuela's opposition demanded that the government reveal specifics of President Hugo Chavez's condition Wednesday, criticizing secrecy surrounding the ailing leader's health more than three weeks after his cancer surgery in Cuba.

Opposition coalition leader Ramon Guillermo Aveledo said at a news conference

that the information provided by government officials "continues to be insufficient."

Chavez has not been seen or heard from since the Dec. 11 operation, and Vice President Nicolas Maduro on Tuesday said the president's condition remained "delicate" due to complications from a respiratory infection.

Maduro also urged Venezuelans to ignore rumors about Chavez's condition.

Aveledo said the opposition has been respectful during Chavez's illness, arguing that "the secrecy is the source of the rumors." "They should tell the truth," Aveledo said, noting that Maduro had pledged to provide full reports about Chavez's condition.

He reiterated the opposition's call for the government to release a medical

report and said all indications are that Chavez won't be able to be sworn in to begin a new term Jan. 10. If Chavez can't take office on that date, Aveledo said the constitution is clear that the National Assembly president should then take over temporarily until a new election is held. He said what happens next in Venezuela should be guided

by "the truth and the constitution."

If Chavez dies or is unable to continue in office, the Venezuelan Constitution says a new election should be held within 30 days.

With rumors swirling that Chavez had taken a turn for the worse,

Maduro said on Tuesday that he had met with the president twice, had spoken with him and would return to Caracas on Wednesday.

"He's totally conscious of the complexity of his post-operative state and he expressly asked us ... to keep the nation informed always, always with the truth, as hard as it may be in certain circumstances," Maduro said in the pre-recorded interview in Havana, which was broadcast Tuesday night by the Caracas-based television network Telesur. □



A man walks past a mural of Venezuela's President Hugo Chavez in Caracas, Venezuela, Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2013.

(AP Photo/Ariana Cubillos)

Chile:

Victor Jara widow asks for US extradition

FEDERICO QUIODRAN

Associated Press

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP)

The widow of folk singer Victor Jara called on the U.S. government Wednesday to extradite a retired Chilean military official charged with murdering her husband during Chile's 1973 coup.

Pedro Barrientos Nunez now lives in Florida and has denied any role in Jara's killing, long remembered as one of the Chilean dictatorship's most brutal crimes. Joan Turner Jara called

the charges against Barrientos and seven other ex-military officers "a message of hope," not only that her husband's murder could be solved, but that many other families may find justice as well. More than 3,000 people were slain during the 1973-90 dictatorship of Gen.

Augusto Pinochet, and most of those crimes remain unsolved.

Investigating Judge Miguel Vazquez, who charged the men last week, has issued an arrest order for Barrien-

tos and wants Chile's government to file a formal extradition request to the U.S. so that he faces trial along with the others.

Turner and her daughters, Manuela and Amanda, urged Chile's Supreme Court to formally request Barrientos' extradition from the United States.

The Jara family spoke next to a statue of Victor Jara inside the stadium where the folk singer and thousands of other leftists were detained during the first days of the coup. □

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Colombia cops blame FARC in attack

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) — Colombia's national police director is blaming the FARC for a grenade attack that injured six people on New Year's Eve, and says this breaks a much-publicized truce that the leftist guerrillas unilaterally declared as a goodwill gesture during peace talks. The government of Juan Manuel Santos rejected the truce proposal, and that same night, New Year's Eve, an Air Force bombing killed at least 13 guerrillas. Gen. Jose Roberto Leon Riano says the attack on a police station in Guapi injured four civilians and two officers. He held a news conference Wednesday, declaring that the grenade attack proves the FARC is not keeping its promises.

Mexico detaining unusual traffickers

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexican marines say they have detained an unlikely band of drug traffickers that includes 12 boys and a woman with a baby who possessed rifles, grenade launchers and drugs. A navy statement issued Wednesday says the 18 people were caught on New Year's Eve in the town of La Estacion in the northern state of Zacatecas. It alleges they were carrying nine rifles, two pistols, two grenade launchers and packets of marijuana and cocaine. The navy says the only woman in the group was carrying a baby girl. It doesn't say what authorities did with the baby. Twelve of the 17 male suspects are said to be minors. □

Illness subsiding on Caribbean cruise

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — The cruise line that operates the Queen Mary 2 says an apparent outbreak of gastrointestinal illness has subsided as the ship heads back to port. Cunard Line spokeswoman Jackie Chase says just two passengers had suspected cases of norovirus. That's down from 201 cases reported by the U.S. CDC as the ship made its way through the Caribbean on a 12-night voyage with more than 2,600 passengers. The CDC and Cunard say the crew of the Queen Mary 2 took steps to halt the spread of the virus such as deploying teams to do additional cleaning of public areas with disinfectant. □

Police rescue 211 protected parrots

ASUNCION, Paraguay (AP) — Police have rescued 211 protected parrots taken from the remote forests of Paraguay, and made four arrests. Veterinarian Carlos Britos identifies the rescued birds as blue-fronted Amazon parrots, whose scientific name is *Amazona aestiva*. He says many are still juveniles and were taken from their nests. He said Wednesday that the birds are being cared for by government biologists in a national park, and will be returned to the wild once they can fly. Blue-fronted Amazons are commonly kept as house pets. Stealing wild animals and plants is a crime in Paraguay, punishable by up to eight years in prison. □

9 killed in Colombian farm massacre

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) — Nine people have been shot to death in the countryside outside Medellin in a massacre police suspect is a settling of accounts between drug traffickers. Gen. Yesid Vasquez is commander of the Metropolitan Police Department in Medellin, Colombia's second largest city. He says that the five men and four women were killed on a farm earlier in the week. Vasquez says the slayings following an afternoon party at the "extremely luxurious" country home, and the farm's owner is among the dead. □

Puerto Rico welcomes new governor

DANICA COTO

Associated Press

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)

— A new governor took office Wednesday in Puerto Rico, marking an ideological shift in a U.S. territory struggling to revive its economy and reduce violent crime.

Alejandro Garcia Padilla was sworn in on a stage overlooking the Atlantic Ocean outside the Capitol

from labor unions angered when Fortuno laid off more than 20,000 government workers to help close a budget deficit.

Garcia said one of his priorities is to create jobs on an island where unemployment hovers above 13 percent, higher than in any U.S. state. "The problems are very, very serious. We cannot minimize them or hide them," he said.

and graduation rates and improve its education and justice system. The island of 4 million people reported a record 1,117 homicides in 2011, with just a small drop in 2012. "Getting there will take time. Things are not going to solve themselves overnight," Garcia said. Many union members and laid-off workers cheered Garcia at the inauguration, including 41-year-old Victor Omar Cotto, who was a supervisor at the Department of Transportation for 13 years until April 2010.

"I came to see the departure of the same person who laid me off," he said, adding that he was out of work for nine months, struggling to support his stay-at-home wife and two children.

The majority of Garcia's supporters wore the red color of his Popular Democratic Party, which supports the island's current commonwealth status. Many clutched umbrellas to protect themselves from a fierce sun and danced to the music of an orchestra clad in all white ahead of the speech.

Hundreds of invited guests were seated around the stage, including Danilo Medina, the president of the Dominican Republic, and ministers from countries including Haiti, Costa Rica and Panama. □



Puerto Rico's newly sworn-in Gov. Alejandro Garcia Padilla at his inaugural ceremony at the Capitol building in San Juan, Puerto Rico, Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2013. Garcia is accompanied by his wife, Vilma Pastrana, and their children; Diego Alejandro, 5, from left, Juan Pablo, 8, and Ana Patricia, 10.

(AP Photo/Ricardo Arduengo)

building in San Juan amid the cheers of thousands of supporters from his party, which opposes statehood. Garcia is a 41-year-old attorney and former local senator who narrowly defeated pro-statehood Gov. Luis Fortuno in November, thanks in part to support

Garcia said Puerto Rico is facing a public debt higher than previously thought, as well as alarming crime statistics and a downgrading of the island's credit. He said the island needs to strengthen its industrial and commercial sectors, boost agricultural production

Haiti protests warnings by US, Canada

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)

— Haiti on Wednesday "vehemently" protested travel advisories recently issued by the U.S. and Canadian governments. The U.S. State Department last week strengthened a travel advisory on Haiti. It warned Americans planning to visit the Caribbean nation about kidnappings, robbery, lawlessness and cholera, noting that at least two U.S. citizens were shot and killed in robbery and kidnapping incidents.

Canada followed with a similar statement.

Complaining that the warnings only hurt Haiti's image, government spokesman Calvin Cadet wrote that the

advisories were incompatible with improvements that authorities have made in security. He noted Haiti has promised to hire more officers for its national police force. His statement also noted the recent dismantling of an alleged kidnapping ring. Police in October arrested Clifford Brandt, the owner of a car dealership and son of a prominent family, on kidnapping charges.

Despite its reputation as a violent place, Haiti has little criminal activity compared to other countries in the Caribbean. It doesn't appear among the top 58 most violent nations compiled by the Geneva Declaration on Armed Vi-

lence and Development, which sponsors studies on crime trends worldwide. Cadet also said Haiti has seen a drop in the number of cholera cases. Health officials say that more than 7,750 people have died of the waterborne illness since the disease surfaced in Haiti several months after the 2010 earthquake.

President Michel Martelly's administration is trying to revive a long-moribund tourism industry and spur foreign investment. Haitian business owners have long complained that such travel advisories overstate criminal activity in the country and scare off potential investors. □

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Afro-Cuban priests prescribe Santeria for Chavez

ANDREA RODRIGUEZ

Associated Press

HAVANA (AP) — A body of top Afro-Cuban priests recommended Wednesday that Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez seek their help as he recovers from his fourth recent cancer-related surgery.

In their annual New Year's forecast known as the "Letter of the Year," the Santeria priests, or "babalawo," expressed hope that Chavez would ask for their assistance in getting well. "I hope, God willing, that he decides to knock on the door of a Cuban priest and that God will allow for the possibility of this individual to do something for him," said Lazaro Cuesta, one of the "babalawo."

"Whichever house he knocks upon, I expect he will receive the help he requires," Cuesta said.

He said priests had not performed a ceremony in

Chavez's name, because they only do so if asked. Chavez has been convalescing in Cuba since his operation last month for an undisclosed cancer. The secrecy surrounding the precise nature of his

ailment and treatment has led to speculation about his health, which Venezuelan officials characterize as "delicate."

Santeria, a blend of Roman Catholicism and the African Yoruba faith, is followed

by many in Cuba, where about a third of the island's 11.2 million people are of African descent. Each year thousands look for the priests' "Letter," which is obtained in a ceremony in October and released

around the new year. In their message for 2013, the priests predicted mass discontent and social uprisings if nations do not "change their ways" and help those less fortunate. "If the different governments of the world ... do not seek an equilibrium and some comprehension in terms of this subject, it is possible that things could end in a strong conflict," Cuesta said.

The priests have a mixed track record despite keeping their predictions vague. Last year they warned that the world could see more earthquakes.

But after devastating temblors in 2010 (Haiti) and 2011 (Japan), the Earth's tectonic faults were relatively gentle to humankind in 2012, killing just 768 people around the globe — far below the 342,000 quake deaths during the previous two years, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. □



Cuban Babalawo Priest Pedro Lopez reads the "Letter of the Year," the annual New Year's forecast by Santeria priests, in Havana, Cuba, Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2013. Top Afro-Cuban priests are recommending that Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez seek their help in his battle with cancer. Chavez is recovering from surgery last month in Cuba.

(AP Photo/Franklin Reyes)

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LOCAL Aruba TODAY

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To celebrate the 2012 successes of the three Marriott hotels, the new General Manager Tom Calame lit the 12 million pagara, at its starting point at the entrance of the Marriott Aruba Surf Club ending the Big Bang at the Marriott Grand Ballroom.

Orchestrated by Morales Fireworks, associates and guests witnessed the spectacular pagara event, blessing the Marriott hotels



for a prosperous 2013. After the "Big Bang" the Dande group spread the good fortune for the associates and guests for the New Year "Ay Nobe". The Aruba Marriott team wishes you all a beautiful 2013. □



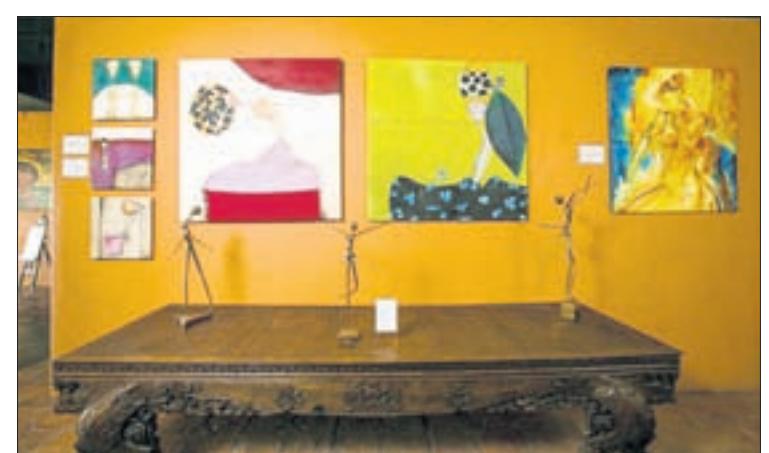
At L'America Gallery:

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ORANJESTAD - L'America Gallery Located just behind Certified Mega Mall will surprise you with an excellent selection of regional and Aruban artwork, sculptures, paintings and art objects, showcasing the abundant talent of Central and South American artists as well as well-established local artists such as Eliza Lejuez and Lutti De Lisle.

The gallery is housed in a beautiful space, comprising a series of large and small rooms, featuring works in all sizes from the monumental to the miniature, in a variety of styles from naïve to impressionist, expressionist and minimal, depicting landscapes, objects and people. The gallery also hangs a number of icons, and religious works of exceptional beauty and detail.

Art collectors who are fans of the work of legendary Colombian artist Fernando Botero and his voluminous people will find similar works at the gallery, as unique portraits and still life, avail-



able for sale, and reasonably priced.

In addition to art, the gallery

also offers framing services by an artist in-house framer who is sure to enhance the

presentation of anything from a photograph to an oil painting. L'America Gallery displays quality framing materials in different sizes, textures and colors, and guarantees prompt and efficient delivery.

Knowledgeable Conny Kiers is at the helm, ready to share any information with clients who saunter in for a look. Don't be shy, she says, come right in. We'll make you a cup of cof-

fee, and we'll make you comfortable so you can feast your eyes on the treasures hanging on the walls of L'America Gallery, Art & Framing Specialists. Open Monday to Friday from 8am to 5pm, on Italianstraat 24-A, suite 3.

Incidentally, the gallery also rents the space for meetings and events, and you could consider renting the gallery for your next corporate meeting. □

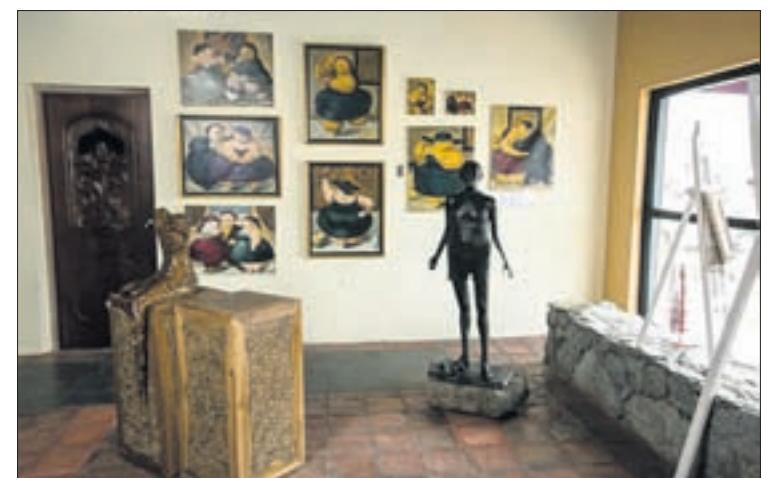
Beauty on the Beach

Amanda Vincent

She is from Devinport IOWA, it is her first time in Aruba, she is staying at Occidental Grand, What she loves most of Aruba is the food and the local people.

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Courtesy of Andrea Alfonzo:

Sweet Treat for Buddy the Cake Boss and family!



SAVANETA - Buddy the Cake Boss has an American reality television series, airing on the cable television network TLC. The stars of the series are Buddy Valastro, who's the shop owner, his retired mother, four older sisters, and three brothers-in-law. The series set is at Carlo's Bake Shop in Hoboken, New Jersey. It portrays the everyday life of running a successful bakery.

Aruba's own Andrea Alfonzo, who has a magic touch herself in the kitchen for fine cuisine and cakes, always had this dream to one day attend one of the tapings of this very popular show to showcase her talent. Andrea is a firm believer that a person can create and achieve anything one can imagine and she lives by that, so she designed what she refers to as her "Wheel of Fortune" and in the center of this circle she placed pictures of Buddy the Cake Boss, Carlo's Bake Shop etc, and in the middle her own creation that she was going to showcase, with the following words: "Divine Intelligence Is In Charge Of My Life. I Am Now Open, Receptive, And Obedient To Its Rich Instruction And Guidance." She placed this

"Wheel of Fortune" with its pictures and words in a spot in her bedroom where she could privately view it and go over it every day. Here follows the real icing on the cake: Andrea did not have to travel to Hoboken, New Jersey, she received a phone call from the owner of local seaside restaurant "The Old Man And The Sea," and was asked if she could bake a cake for Mr. Buddy Valastro, the Cake Boss! This dream became a living reality. One of the waiters even went to the kitchen to share the good news with Andrea, "Buddy the Cake Boss shared the whole cake with his family and the other guests in the restaurant and even had a second slice!"

(Courtesy of Bernard Simon.) □



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Aruba says "Masha Danki" to loyal visitors

PALM BEACH - Recently, the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure of honoring Alejandro Novacovsky and Monica Pinner, resident of Buenos Aires, Argentina, as Goodwill Ambassador of Aruba.

The symbolic honorary title is presented in the name of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba for 10 and 20-or-more consecutive



years. The certificate was presented by Darline S. de Cuba, representing Aruba Tourism Authority, with activities coordinator Jennifer Melfor, who conducted the ceremony held at Aruba Divi Phoenix.

Top reasons for returning provided by the honorees were the Fantastic Sunsets, Beautiful Blue Ocean, Friendly Aruban Hospitality and local Restaurants. □

Post Aruba honors winners of Local Writing Competition!

ORANJESTAD - Post Aruba N.V. recently awarded the prizes of the Local Writing Competition for Young People 2012 during a press conference that took place at the main office of Post Aruba. From October 5 until November 2, the adolescents had the opportunity to take action and express themselves through the Local Writing Competition for Young People 2012, organized by Post Aruba. This competition provided an excellent opportunity to motivate the youth to write letters and at the same time increase awareness of important global issues, such as this year's theme: "Write a letter about why water is precious".

The three jury members had the difficult task of choosing the winners of this

competition amongst all the high level letters that Post Aruba received.

The winners are: third place, LangXin Zhang, 15, from Colegio San Nicolas, second place, Demi Flanegien 11 from Colegio Conrado Coronel, and the first place winner, Aditya Gupta, 15, from International School of Aruba.

With prizes such as tickets to Miami sponsored by American Airlines and Post Aruba for 2 people, a Laptop Lenovo sponsored by Antraco Aruba Group and a weekend stay sponsored by the Holiday Inn Sun-Spree Resort, Post Aruba rewarded the efforts of these three winning participants. The letter of the first place winner, Aditya Gupta, will be sent to Switzerland to represent Aruba at the Inter-



national letter writing competition for young people 2013, organized by the Universal Postal Union (UPU) together with UNESCO.

Post Aruba also rewarded the school with the most

participants, the school with the most letters received, and this award went to the Graf von Zinzenzendorf.

The school received a gift certificate of 1000 florins

courtesy of Antraco Group. For Post Aruba N.V. organizing such a competition is always a pleasure; the results show that it is a positive and rewarding investment. □



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In this Aug. 17, 2012, file photo, Carl Pettersson, of Sweden, puts on the first green during the second round of the Wyndham Championship golf tournament in Greensboro, N.C.

Associated Press

Pettersson: Golf on 'witch hunt' of long putters

DOUG FERGUSON
AP Golf Writer

KAPALUA, Hawaii (AP) — Carl Pettersson says the proposed rule to ban the anchored stroke for long putters feels like a "witch hunt," and that golf's governing bodies were only reacting to three of the last five major champions using a belly putter.

"It seems silly to ban something that's been around for 40 years," Pettersson said in his first comments since the U.S. Golf Association and Royal & Ancient Golf Club announced plans Nov. 28 to outlaw anchored strokes. "It's unfortunate. I feel like I'm 16 years behind because I haven't putted with anything else for 16 years."

Pettersson, who qualified for the Tournament of Champions by winning at Hilton Head, began using a broom-handle putter that he anchors to his chest between his sophomore and junior year at North Carolina State.

Continued on Page 18



Pettersson

Continued from Page 17

Keegan Bradley (PGA Championship), Webb Simpson (U.S. Open) and Ernie Els (British Open) used a belly putter to win their majors.

Two more months of comment period remain before the rule becomes official, and then it does not take effect until the next Rules of Golf is published Jan. 1, 2016. Even as the long putters were getting more attention, Pettersson made one of the most compelling cases to keep them. It is the only putting stroke he has used during his 10 years on the PGA Tour, after he changed while in college to become more consistent.

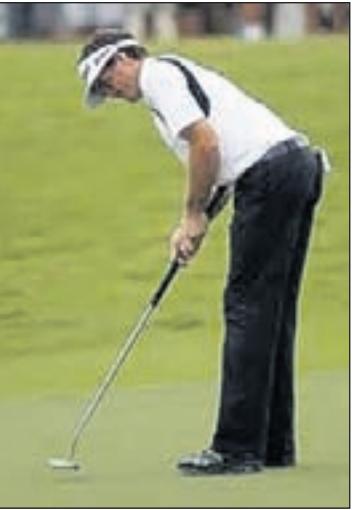
Pettersson long has argued that he has spent thousands of hours practicing the stroke, which did not

come naturally to him, and that to start over would put him at an unfair disadvantage. He was said to be among those who might consider a lawsuit if the rule is adopted, though the easygoing Swede said he would see how this year unfolded.

"I don't know," he said when asked if he would challenge the rule. "I haven't made up my mind yet. I'm just going to sit back and see what happens."

In the meantime, he has no plans to change putters. Simpson said he had been practicing on occasion with a short putter in case of a ban, and Bradley had some fun at the World Challenge last month when he grabbed a short putter on the practice green at Sherwood and made a 20-foot putt.

Both showed up at Kapalua



In this Sept. 22, 2011, file photo, Keegan Bradley puts on the third green during the first round of the Tour Championship golf tournament at East Lake Golf Club in Atlanta.

Associated Press

with their belly putters.

"I'm not going to change," Bradley said. "I'm not even thinking about it, to be honest. I'm going to wait for the rule to pass first, and then

I'll think about what to do." Pettersson said he tinkered with a few grips during his month at home in North Carolina, though not to the point that he practiced on a real green. He also said he was not surprised by the decision, saying it became clear in the last few months that the USGA and R&A were leaning toward a ban.

"It feels a bit like a witch hunt to me," Pettersson said. "It was a pure reaction to Keegan and Ernie and Webb. They keep harping on the younger generation using them, but I think they're going to ban it because it looks bad. But you have strong arguments from other players, too."

Tiger Woods, Steve Stricker and Graeme McDowell are on a long list of players who use conventional putters and believe an anchored stroke should go

away, saying it takes the skill out of putting because the top part of the club is anchored to the body. What concerned golf's top officials is that players no longer were using an anchored stroke out of desperation to improve their putting, but as a way to putt better.

"There's no argument that it's a better way to putt because then everybody would be using it," Pettersson said. "If it was easy, everybody on the PGA Tour would be using it. So I don't know where they got that from. It's just a different way of putting."

The PGA Tour can set its own rules, and there has been speculation that when the rule passes, the tour would adopt it before 2016 to avoid the long putters getting too much attention over the next few years. □

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Azarenka beats Lisicki, reaches Brisbane quarters

JOHN PYE
AP Sports Writer

BRISBANE, Australia (AP)

— Top-ranked Victoria Azarenka opened her 2013 season with a 6-3, 6-3 win over Germany's Sabine Lisicki on Wednesday to join No. 3 Serena Williams and fourth-seeded Angelique Kerber in the Brisbane International quarterfinals.

Azarenka, who won here in 2009 without dropping a set, got the better of 37th-ranked Lisicki in a match containing nine breaks of serve.

The Belarusian won the Sydney International and then her first major at the Australian Open last year during a 26-match winning streak to start the season and spent most of 2012 atop the women's rankings.

She said her focus ahead of her first major title defense was more about attacking than defending.

"I actually don't really look at defending anything. I'm just looking to win," Azarenka said.

"I'm going to have the same mindset for as long as I'm playing."

In earlier second-round matches, Angelique Kerber recovered from 5-2 down in the deciding tie-breaker to beat Puerto Rican qualifier Monica Puig, 3-6, 6-4, 7-6 (7) and Sloane Stephens had a 6-3, 6-4 win over Sweden's Sofia Arvidsson to set up a quarterfinal against fellow American Williams.

Azarenka said Lisicki, who was serving at up to 194 kph (121 mph), proved a tough match and a good measure of her preparations for the Australian Open, which starts on Jan. 14.

She said Lisicki was "serving some bombs," although

the German player was only getting half of her first serves into play and had five double faults. Lisicki mixed 36 winners with 36 unforced errors, trying to push Azarenka around the court.

"I had a tough challenge at the beginning," she said. "It's always good to see where you're at, right at the start."

She'll next play Kazakh qualifier Ksenia Pervak, who has ousted former No. 1 Caroline Wozniacki and Urszula Radwanska in Brisbane in matches decided by third-set tiebreakers.

"I hope she's tired," Azarenka joked. "She's a young girl with a lot of potential. She's going to be really motivated."

I'm looking forward to the challenge."

Five of the top eight seeded players had already been eliminated midway through the second round. Kerber narrowly avoided that fate, coming back from 4-1 down in the third set and clawing her way back in a tiebreaker when Puig was two points from the biggest victory of her life.

The 19-year-old Puig, ranked No. 124, buried a swinging volley into the bottom of the net at 5-2 in the tiebreaker and it changed the momentum of the match.

"For sure it was a surprise how she played. I didn't know her before, but, yeah, I'm sure that she'll be coming very soon into the top 50," Kerber said of Puig. "I have a lot of confidence right now that I won again (a) very close match."

Stephens had a convincing win over Arvidsson and next faces a childhood hero.

"Obviously she's been a really great influence in my tennis year career. I'm excited to play her and get on the court with her. I think it'll be fun," the 19-year-old Stephens said.

Williams said she has been following Stephens' career and was "a fan" of her young Fed Cup teammate's style. □



Victoria Azarenka of Belarus plays a shot in her second round match against Sabine Lisicki of Germany during the Brisbane International tennis tournament in Brisbane, Australia, Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2013.

Associated Press

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Regular-season winners don't always make champs

ARNIE STAPLETON

AP Pro Football Writer

DENVER (AP) — The Denver Broncos and Atlanta Falcons, who tied for the NFL's best record at 13-3, are well aware of one of the league's biggest truisms: More often than not, the regular season means little in the playoffs.

Over the last decade, just two of the 13 teams that had the best regular-season record — or tied for the best mark — went on to win the Super Bowl: The '02 Tampa Bay Buccaneers and the '03 New England Patriots.

The last eight teams to enter the playoffs with the best record bowed out before they could put their fingerprints on the Lombardi Trophy and revel in a rain of confetti.

Both the Broncos and Falcons are promising to practice like champions this week and not allow rest and relaxation during their first-round bye to turn into rust and ruin.

In the last seven seasons, three No. 6 seeds and a No. 4 seed ended up winning it all, giving hope to the likes of the Baltimore Ravens,



Tampa Bay Buccaneers tight end Luke Stocker (88) makes the catch as Atlanta Falcons outside linebacker Stephen Nicholas (54) defends during the first half of an NFL football game Sunday, Dec. 30, 2012, in Atlanta.

Associated Press

Washington Redskins, Cincinnati Bengals and Minnesota Vikings in this year's playoff pool.

A year ago, the Green Bay Packers rested their regulars in the season finale and they lost their edge, be-

coming the first 15-1 team to lose its first playoff game — to a New York Giants team that was 7-7 in mid-December and went on to win it all.

"That's kind of what it was for us when I was in Indy,"

Broncos wide receiver Brandon Stokley said of the '05 Colts, who went 14-2 but lost to Pittsburgh in the divisional round. "We kind of rested the last week, then we had a bye. It's too much. So, I like just grind-

ing every week, just playing football."

That's exactly what Peyton Manning's new Broncos team did, securing the AFC's top seed on Sunday with its 11th straight win.

Along with the Falcons, Patriots and San Francisco 49ers, the Broncos get a break this week, one that can prove a pitfall as much as a profit.

"We've just got to practice like we're playing this week," Denver receiver Eric Decker said.

While the Broncos stormed into the playoffs, the Falcons, who already had the NFC's top seed secured, didn't gain any momentum by losing to Tampa Bay on Sunday.

"Before this game was played, we were the No. 1 seed in the playoffs, at the end of the game, nothing has changed," Falcons tight end Tony Gonzalez reasoned. "We're a very good team; we'll just use this as a wake-up call."

Says another Atlanta veteran, Asante Samuel: "We're going to practice like champs. And we're going to play like champs from now on." □

Union responds to latest NHL offer in labor talks

By IRA PODELL

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) -- The NHL players' association delivered its latest counteroffer to the league Wednesday as the two sides try to resolve the lockout.

That makes four offers between the sides since the NHL restarted the negotiation process Thursday with a new contract proposal. What has become a major point of contention is how a player's pension will be funded. A small group meeting on the pension issue was held Wednesday morning before the players' association presented its latest offer to the league during a one-hour afternoon meeting. A group of players arrived at the NHL offices around 8 p.m. as the union and league pre-

pared to meet again. A deal can't be done without a resolution on pensions.

The league presented the players with a counteroffer Tuesday night.

The lockout has reached its 109th day, and NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman has said that the league told the union a deal needs to be in place by Jan. 11 so a 48-game season can begin eight days later. All games through Jan. 14 along with the All-Star game have been canceled, claiming more than 50 percent of the original schedule.

Wednesday night is the deadline for the players' association to declare a "disclaimer of interest," which would dissolve the union and make it a trade association. That would al-

low players to file antitrust lawsuits against the NHL. If the deadline passes, union members could vote again to authorize their board to file a disclaimer at a later date.

"The players retain their option and it's an internal matter," players' association executive director Donald Fehr said Wednesday.

The league didn't make any statements after the meeting Wednesday afternoon. Fehr believed an agreement on a players-funded pension had been reached before talks blew up in early December. That apparently wasn't the case, or the NHL has changed its offer regarding the pension in exchange for agreeing to other things the union wanted.

The NHL proposed in its first offer Thursday that pension contributions come out of the players' share of revenues, and \$50 million of the league's make-whole payment of \$300 million will be allocated and set aside to fund potential underfunding liabilities of the plan at the end of the collective bargaining agreement.

Last month, the NHL agreed to raise its make-whole offer of deferred payments from \$211 million to \$300 million as part of a proposed package that required the union to agree on three nonnegotiable points. Instead, the players' association accepted the raise in funds, but then made counterproposals on the issues the league stated had no wiggle room.

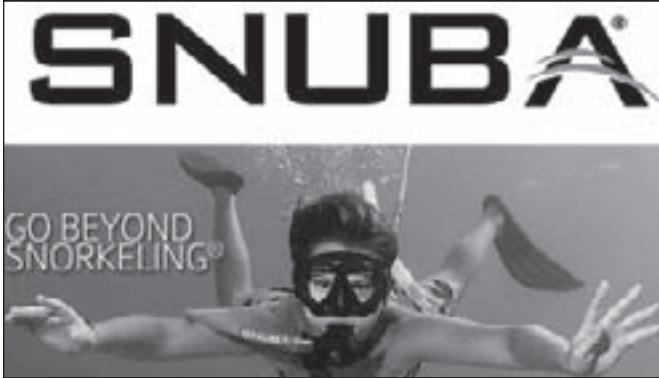
After the league countered

with another offer Tuesday night, Bettman said the new proposal addressed specific areas the union requested.

"There were certain things that the players' association asked for that we agreed to. There were some things that we moved in their direction, and there were other things that we said no," he said. "That's part of the process."

But it's a process that has limited time to be completed.

The NHL is the only North American professional sports league to cancel a season because of a labor dispute, losing the 2004-05 campaign to a lockout. A 48-game season was played in 1995 after a lockout stretched into January. □



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Ravens' LB Ray Lewis to retire after playoffs

DAVID GINSBURG

AP Sports Writer

OWINGS MILLS, Maryland

(AP) — Ray Lewis spent 17 seasons deftly patrolling the middle of the football field and serving as an inspirational leader for the Baltimore Ravens. Now he's poised and eager to become a full-time dad.

Lewis announced Wednesday that he will end his brilliant NFL career after the Ravens complete their 2013 playoff run.

Lewis has been sidelined since Oct. 14 with a torn right triceps. The 13-time Pro Bowl middle linebacker intends to return Sunday to face the Indianapolis Colts in what will almost certainly be his final home game.

"Everything that starts has an end," Lewis said. "For me, today, I told my team that this will be my last ride." Lewis will walk away from the game because he wants to spend more time with his sons. While working to return from his injury, Lewis watched two of his boys play on the same high school football team. He intends to see Ray Lewis III perform as a freshman next year for the University of Miami, where the elder Lewis starred before the Ravens selected him in the first round of the 1996 NFL draft.

"God is calling," the 37-year-old Lewis said. "My children have made the ultimate sacrifice for their father for 17 years. I don't want to see them do that no more. I've done what I wanted to do in this business, and now it's my turn to give them something back."

That's why Lewis will pull off his No. 52 uniform for the

last time after the Ravens lose or claim their second Super Bowl title.

"It's either (that or) hold onto the game and keep playing and let my kids miss out on times we can be spending together," Lewis said. "Because I always promised my son if he got a full ride on scholarship Daddy is going to be there. I can't miss that."

Lewis was the AP Defensive Player of the Year in 2000, the same season he was voted the Most Valuable Player in the Super Bowl following Baltimore's 34-7 rout of the New York Giants. Lewis was also Defensive Player of the Year in 2003, and is the only player in NFL history with at least 40 career sacks and 30 interceptions.

"I never played the game for individual stats. I only played the game to make my team a better team," he said.

Lewis has been with the Ravens since they moved from Cleveland. After being selected 26th overall in Baltimore's first NFL draft, Lewis became a fixture at middle linebacker — and a beloved figure in Baltimore. He remained that way even after his alleged involvement in a double-murder in Atlanta in early 2000.

In June of that year, a judge approved a deal allowing Lewis to avoid murder charges and jail time by pleading guilty to a misdemeanor and testifying against two co-defendants. Within a year, Lewis was in the Super Bowl, leading the Ravens to their only NFL championship.

The news of his decision quickly resounded around

the rest of the NFL.

Colts coach Chuck Pagano, who served as Lewis' defensive coordinator last year, said, "I thought, shoot, the guy could play forever and would play forever. Great person, great man, great player, just an unbelievable human being — what he's done for that organization, that city and for that matter, so many people. He's obviously a first-ballot Hall of Famer and will be sorely missed."

Lewis is the key figure in a Baltimore defense that has long carried a reputation for being fierce, unyielding and downright nasty. He led the Ravens in tackles in 14 of his 17 seasons, the exceptions being those years in which he missed significant time with injuries (2002, 2005, 2012).

"It was definitely an honor just to be in his presence, but to play with him and to be in front of him is amazing," Ravens defensive tackle Haloti Ngata said. "I know we'll definitely miss him."

When Lewis tore his triceps in a game against the Dallas Cowboys, it was feared he was done for the season. But he would have none of that.

"From the time I got hurt, everything I've done up to this point has been to get back with my team to make another run at the Lombardi (Trophy)," he said.

Well, not everything. Lewis spent time watching his boys play football, which caused him to call his experience on the sideline "bittersweet."

"I got to be there every Friday," Lewis said. "Me being who I am, not having a fa-



In this Dec. 18, 2011, file photo, Baltimore Ravens linebacker Ray Lewis peers over the line of scrimmage during the first half of a NFL football game against the San Diego Chargers in San Diego.

Associated Press

ther myself, that damaged me a lot. I didn't want my kids to relive that."

Next year, Lewis will dedicate himself to his family instead of the Ravens. □

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Clinton's clot an uncommon complication

M. MARCHIONE

AP Chief Medical Writer

The kind of blood clot in the skull that doctors say Hillary Rodham Clinton has is relatively uncommon but can occur after an injury like the fall and concussion the secretary of state was endured earlier this month. Doctors said Monday that an MRI scan revealed a clot in a vein in the space between the brain and the skull behind Clinton's right ear.

The clot did not lead to a stroke or neurological damage and is being treated with blood thinners, and she will be released once the proper dose is worked out, her doctors said in a statement.

Clinton has been at New York-Presbyterian Hospital since Sunday, when the clot was diagnosed during what the doctors called a routine follow-up exam. At the time, her spokesman would not say where the clot was located, leading to speculation it was another leg clot like the one she suffered behind her right knee in 1998.

Clinton had been diagnosed with a concussion Dec. 13 after a fall in her home that was blamed on a stomach virus that left her weak and dehydrated.

The type of clot she developed, a sinus venous thrombosis, "certainly isn't the most common thing to happen after a concussion" and is one of the few types of blood clots in the skull or head that are treated with blood thinners, said neurologist Dr. Larry Goldstein. He is director of Duke University's stroke center and has no role in Clinton's care or personal knowledge of it. □

Brain study: Fructose may spur overeating

MARILYNN MARCHIONE

MIKE STOBBE

AP Medical Writers

This is your brain on sugar — for real. Scientists have used imaging tests to show for the first time that fructose, a sugar that saturates the American diet, can trigger brain changes that may lead to overeating.

After drinking a fructose beverage, the brain doesn't register the feeling of being full as it does when simple glucose is consumed, researchers found. It's a small study and does not prove that fructose or its relative, high-fructose corn syrup, can cause obesity, but experts say it adds evidence they may play a role. These sugars often are added to processed foods and beverages, and consumption has risen dramatically since the 1970s along with obesity. A third of U.S. children and teens and more than two-thirds of adults are obese or overweight.

All sugars are not equal — even though they contain the same amount of calories — because they are metabolized differently in the body. Table sugar is sucrose, which is half fructose, half glucose. High-fructose corn syrup is 55 percent fructose and 45 percent glucose. Some nutrition experts say this sweetener may pose special risks, but others and the industry reject that claim. And doctors say we eat too much sugar in all forms.

For the study, scientists used magnetic resonance imaging, or MRI, scans to track blood flow in the brain in 20 young, normal-weight people before and after they had drinks containing glucose or fructose in two sessions several weeks apart. Scans showed that drinking glucose "turns off or sup-

presses the activity of areas of the brain that are critical for reward and desire for food," said one study leader, Yale University endocrinologist Dr. Robert Sherwin. With fructose, "we don't see those changes," he said. "As a result, the desire to eat continues — it isn't turned off."

What's convincing, said Dr. Jonathan Purnell, an endocrinologist at Oregon Health & Science University, is that the imaging results mirrored how hungry the people said they felt, as well as what earlier studies found in animals.

"It implies that fructose, at

and high-fructose corn syrup, Purnell suggested. "Try to avoid the sugar-sweetened beverages. It doesn't mean you can't ever have them," but control their size and how often they are consumed, he said.

A second study in the journal suggests that only severe obesity carries a high death risk — and that a few extra pounds might even provide a survival advantage. However, independent experts say the methods are too flawed to make those claims.

The study comes from a federal researcher who drew controversy in 2005

sters her original one, by assessing nearly 100 other studies covering almost 2.9 million people around the world. She again concludes that very obese people had the highest risk of death but that overweight people had a 6 percent lower mortality rate than thinner people. She also concludes that mildly obese people had a death risk similar to that of normal-weight people.

Critics again have focused on her methods. This time, she included people too thin to fit what some consider to be normal weight, which could have taken in people emaciated by cancer or other diseases, as well as smokers with elevated risks of heart disease and cancer.

"Some portion of those thin people are actually sick, and sick people tend to die sooner," said Donald Berry, a biostatistician at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston.

The problems created by the study's inclusion of smokers and people with pre-existing illness "cannot be ignored," said Susan Gapstur, vice president of epidemiology for the American Cancer Society.

A third critic, Dr. Walter Willett of the Harvard School of Public Health, was blunter: "This is an even greater pile of rubbish" than the 2005 study, he said. Willett and others have done research since the 2005 study that found higher death risks from being overweight or obese.

Flegal defended her work. She noted that she used standard categories for weight classes. She said statistical adjustments were made for smokers, who were included to give a more real-world sample. □



High fructose corn syrup is listed as an ingredient on a can of soda in Philadelphia. Scientists have used imaging tests to show for the first time that fructose, a sugar that saturates the American diet, can trigger brain changes that may lead to overeating.

(AP Photo/Matt Rourke)

least with regards to promoting food intake and weight gain, is a bad actor compared to glucose," said Purnell. He wrote a commentary that appears with the federally funded study in Wednesday's Journal of the American Medical Association.

Researchers now are testing obese people to see if they react the same way to fructose and glucose as the normal-weight people in this study did.

What to do? Cook more at home and limit processed foods containing fructose

with a report that found thin and normal-weight people had a slightly higher risk of death than those who were overweight. Many experts criticized that work, saying the researcher — Katherine Flegal of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention — painted a misleading picture by including smokers and people with health problems ranging from cancer to heart disease. Those people tend to weigh less and therefore make pudgy people look healthy by comparison. Flegal's new analysis bol-

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LG beats rivals in race to sell new OLED TVs



In this photo released by LG Electronics on Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2013, models pose with LG Electronics' organic light-emitting diode (OLED) television in Seoul, South Korea. LG Electronics said Wednesday customers are pre-ordering the big-screen TVs that offer sharper and clear images using advanced technology.

Associated Press

YOUNKYUNG LEE
AP Technology Writer
SEOUL, South Korea (AP)
— LG Electronics Inc. started taking pre-orders on Wednesday for the world's first big TVs that use an advanced display technology promising startlingly clear images on wafer-thin screens.

The South Korean company said the 55-inch TVs, which use a technology called "OLED" and have a price tag of 11 million won (\$10,335), will be delivered to buyers in its home market next month. The new TVs will be available in North America, Europe and the rest of Asia before the end of March, LG said in a statement.

While LG becomes the world's first company to bring a big-screen next-

generation TV to market, it's far from clear whether the bet will pay off because of the high cost and difficulties of manufacturing, cutthroat competition from rivals and diminishing returns from incremental increases in image quality. TVs using OLEDs, or organic light-emitting diodes, feature images with enhanced clarity, deeper color saturation and sharper contrast than liquid crystal display TVs.

The advanced, energy-efficient display technology makes it possible to manufacture thinner televisions: LG's model is just 4 millimeters thick.

LG's announcement is the culmination of a race by electronics makers to be the first to deliver the next-generation sets that began

in 2007 when Sony Corp. showed off the world's first OLED TV, which had an 11-inch screen. But the Japanese company failed to follow up with a bigger display.

While OLED panels are more widely used in mobile screens, mass producing large panels is still tough because of technological challenges. Jang Moon-ik, director of LG's TV business, said in an interview last year that only two companies in the world have a capacity to make large screen OLED TVs: LG and rival South Korean company Samsung Electronics.

Even though LG and Samsung touted OLEDs as the future of television, both failed to deliver them to the market in the fourth quarter

of 2012 as promised due to manufacturing challenges. Samsung declined to comment on the availability of its OLED TVs, saying making perfect products is more important than the launch schedule.

Grabbing the title of the first OLED TV maker is much more symbolic than practical because initial production numbers will likely be small.

Manufacturing big-screen new TVs requires billions in investments to upgrade factories. South Korean TV makers hope cutting-edge display technology can

help offset falling TV prices and differentiate their products from fast-growing Chinese rivals.

Japanese companies, which dominated the global TV market before the ascent of Samsung and LG, are struggling to come up with their own next-generation TV sets to avoid falling further behind but don't have enough cash to invest in new technology. Last year, Sony and Panasonic announced a partnership to jointly produce large OLED panels but have not made any further announcements. □

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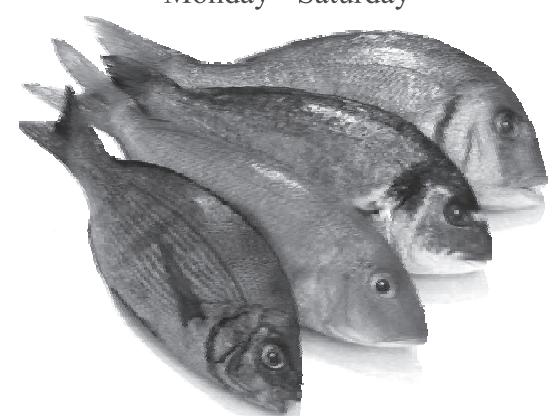
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Stocks soar on budget deal, but problems lurk

CHRISTINA REXRODE
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The “fiscal cliff” compromise, even with all its chaos, controversy and unresolved questions, was enough to ignite the stock market on Wednesday, the first trading day of the new year. The Dow Jones industrial average careened more than 300 points higher, its biggest gain since December 2011. It’s now just 5 percent below its record high close reached in October 2007. The Russell 2000, an index that tracks smaller companies, shot up to the highest close in its history. The reverie multiplied across the globe, with stock indexes throughout Europe and Asia leaping higher. A leading British index, the FTSE 100, closed above 6,000 for the first time since July 2011. In the U.S., the rally was extraordinarily broad. For every stock that fell on the New York Stock Exchange, roughly 10 rose. Technology stocks rose the most. U.S. government bond prices fell sharply as

investors pulled money out of safe-harbor investments. And the VIX, an index that measures investors’ expectations of future market volatility, plunged more than 18 percent to 14.68, the lowest close since October. The Dow enjoyed big gains throughout the day, up by more than 200 points within minutes of the opening bell. It swelled even bigger in the final half hour of trading, and closed up 2.4 percent to 13,412.55.

The Standard & Poor’s 500 jumped 36.23, or 2.5 percent, to 1,462.42. The Nasdaq rose 92.75, or 3.1 percent, to 3,112.26.

The very last week of each year and the first two days of the new year usually average out to a gain for U.S. stocks. But this year stood out. From 2008 to 2012, the Dow rose an average of 93 points on the first trading day of the year, less than a third of Wednesday’s gain of 308.41. During that period the Dow fell on the first trading day of the year only once, in 2008.

Despite the euphoria,

many investors remained cautious. The deal that politicians hammered out merely postpones the country’s budget reckoning, they said, rather than averting it. “Washington negotiations remind me of the Beach Boys song, ‘We’ll have fun, fun, fun ‘til her daddy takes the T-Bird (a kind of wine) away,” Jack Ablin, chief investment officer of BMO Private Bank in Chicago, wrote in a note to clients. “Nothing got solved,” added T. Doug Dale, chief investment officer for Security Ballou Wealth Management in Jackson, Mississippi.

According to these and other market watchers, investors were celebrating Wednesday not because they love the budget deal that was cobbled together, but because they were grateful there was any deal at all. “Most people think that no deal would have been worse than a bad deal,” said Mark Lehmann, president of JMP Securities in San Francisco.

“There’s definitely another drama coming down the

road,” said Lehmann. “That’s the March cliff.” The political bickering that’s almost certain to persist could have another unwelcome effect: influencing ratings agencies to cut the U.S. government’s credit score. That happened before, when Standard & Poor’s cut its rating on U.S. government debt in August 2011, and the stock market plunged. Even so, Wednesday’s performance gave no hint of the dark clouds on the horizon.

The yield on the 10-year Treasury note rose sharply, to 1.84 percent from 1.75 percent. Prices for oil and key metals were up. The price of copper, which can be a gauge of how investors feel about manufacturing, rose 2.3 percent.

The gains persisted despite small reminders that there are still serious problems punctuating the world economy, like middling growth in the U.S. and the still-unsolved European debt crisis. □

US manufacturing expanded slightly in December 2012

C. S. RUGABER
AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. manufacturing grew slightly last month and factory hiring increased. The modest gain suggests the economy entered the new year with some momentum. The Institute for Supply Management said Wednesday that its index of manufacturing activity rose in December to 50.7. That’s up from a reading of 49.5 in the November, which was the lowest reading since July 2009, one month after the recession ended.

A reading above 50 indicates growth, while a reading below signals contraction. The ISM is a trade group of purchasing managers.

A measure of employment increased last month to 52.7. That’s up from 48.4 in November, which was the first time the employment gauge fell below 50 in three years. Factories have cut jobs in three of the four months through November, according to government data. The jump in employment in the ISM survey sug-

gests manufacturers may have stepped up hiring last month. The Labor Department releases the December jobs report on Friday. Still, a gauge of new orders was unchanged and production grew more slowly, the survey found. Manufacturers also cut back on stockpiles, a sign of concern about future demand.

“The trend in manufacturing remains weak,” Jim O’Sullivan, an economist at High Frequency Economics, said in a note to clients. The closely watched manufacturing survey was completed before Congress reached a deal to avoid the “fiscal cliff.”

The last-minute deal passed Tuesday averts widespread tax increases and delays deep spending cuts that had threatened to push the country back into recession. Still, most Americans will see some increase in taxes this year, which will likely slow consumer spending. □

Macau casino revenue in 2012 rose to \$38B

KELVIN CHAN
AP Business Writer

HONG KONG (AP) —

Casino revenue in Macau climbed 13.5 percent last year to a record \$38 billion, as the Asian gambling hub reinforced its position as the world’s biggest gambling market.

Gross revenue from Macau’s 35 casinos also hit a monthly record in December, rising 20 percent to 28.2 billion Macau patacas (\$3.5 billion), according to data posted on the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau on Wednesday.

But gambling revenue growth eased off in 2012 from the year before, when it rocketed 42 percent to \$33.5 billion, as China’s economy slowed and wealthy mainland Chinese gamblers held back amid fears about a crackdown on corruption.

Analysts noted that the decline in Chinese high-rollers, who account for two-thirds

of Macau casino revenue, has been offset by growing numbers of middle-class Chinese.

Chinese gamblers account for the bulk of visitors to Macau, a former Portuguese colony that returned to Chinese control in 1999.

Despite the moderating growth, casino operators have pushed ahead with expansion plans in Macau, where companies such as Las Vegas Sands Corp. and Wynn Resorts Ltd. earn the bulk of their profits. Some 90 percent of Sands’ profit

lion casino resort, its second in Macau, while local operator SJM Holdings received land approval to build a 2,000-room hotel with 700 gambling tables. Earlier, Sands said it plans a Parisian-themed resort that would be its fourth casino project while Wynn unveiled plans for a \$4 billion resort.

The new projects, which are expected to start opening by mid-2015 at the earliest, will be centered around the Cotai Strip, an area of reclaimed land between two islands that is modeled on the Las Vegas Strip.

Macau’s economy has boomed since it ended a four-decade casino monopoly in 2002.

Gambling revenue there has now swept far past Las Vegas, where growth has been flat in recent years as the market has matured. Las Vegas revenue totaled \$6.1 billion in 2011. □



Casino revenue in Macau climbed 13.5 percent in 2012 to a record \$38 billion, as the Asian gambling hub reinforced its position as the world’s biggest gambling market. (AP Photo/Vincent Yu)

The semiautonomous region, an hour by ferry west of Hong Kong, is the only place in China where casino gambling is legal.

comes from Asia, including half from its Macau properties.

In October, MGM received approval to build a \$2.5 bil-

Avis buying Zipcar in deal worth nearly \$500M

S. BOMKAMP
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Avis is leaping into the car-sharing service business by buying Zipcar for \$491.2 million, aiming to capture a new type of customer and technology that will vastly expand its car rental options. Car sharing has become a popular alternative to traditional rentals in metropolitan areas and on college campuses, allowing members to get a vehicle for an hour or two for short trips instead of renting a car for a day or using mass transit. The segment has been growing while traditional car rentals have struggled in the current slow-growth economy.

Zipcar, which was founded in 2000, has more than 760,000 members, triple what it had in 2008. It went public in 2011 and 2012 is expected to be its first-ever profitable year. Avis Budget Group Inc. is the

third-largest U.S. rental car company, behind Enterprise Rent-a-Car and Hertz

past but what I've come to realize is that car sharing, particularly on the scale

business," Avis' Chairman and CEO Ron Nelson said in a conference call after



A Zipcar is parked at a lot, Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2013 in New York. Avis is buying Zipcar for \$491.2 million, expanding its offerings from traditional car rentals to car sharing services.

(AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

Global Holdings Inc.

"I've been somewhat dismissive of car sharing in the

that Zipcar has achieved and will achieve, is complementary to our traditional

the deal was announced. Nelson said the acquisition means Avis will now

Firm predicts 2013 auto sales will be strong

The Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — A healthier economy and more model introductions should push U.S. auto sales above the 15 million mark this year, predicts an auto industry research firm.

The Polk research firm says auto sales should continue to lead the country's economic recovery, rising nearly 7 percent over 2012 to 15.3 million new vehicle registrations.

Automakers release December and full-year sales for 2012 on Thursday. Analysts think sales reached 14.5 million last year, the strongest performance since 2007 — just before Americans felt the impact of the recession. Sales of more than 15 million are considered a sign of health for the auto industry and the economy, many analysts say.

Polk does not expect pre-recession sales levels of 17 million for several more years, Anthony Pratt, Polk's forecasting director for the Americas, said Wednesday.

Polk expects 43 new models to be introduced this year, up 50 percent from last year. New models usually boost sales. The company also predicts a rebound in sales of large pickups and midsize cars.

But Polk's optimistic forecast firm hinges on Washington reaching an agreement on spending cuts, which could happen later in the year. On New Year's Day, congress approved a compromise to avoid the so-called "fiscal cliff." The deal raises taxes for incomes exceeding \$400,000 for individuals and \$450,000 for couples. But it delayed action on dramatic federal spending cuts and debt, setting up another showdown in a divided congress.

Those first showdowns will come over the next three months, when the government's legal ability to borrow money will expire and temporary financing for federal agency budgets will expire.

Polk predicted a handful of other trends for 2013. Sales

will grow for big pickup trucks, which are very profitable for automakers. Demand has been depressed for five years due to the weak economy, but should get a lift in 2013 thanks to

the market, 2 percentage points larger than any other type of segment.

"Recent redesigns of nearly every vehicle in the midsize segment are forcing more competition and contin-



Tesla workers cheer on one the first Tesla Model S cars sold during a rally at the Tesla factory in Fremont, Calif. A healthier economy and more new model introductions should push U.S. auto sales above the 15 million mark in 2013, predicts an auto industry research firm. The Polk research firm says auto sales should continue to lead the country's economic recovery, rising nearly 7 percent over 2012 to 15.3 million new vehicle registrations.

(AP Photo/Paul Sakuma)

redesigned trucks from GM, Toyota and Ford.

Polk also said the midsize sedan segment will continue to lead the industry. It's now at 18.5 percent of

ued growth," said Tom Libby, Polk's lead North American analysts.

Polk joins many other analysts in predicting 2013 sales at or above 15 million. □

be able to reach younger, more tech-savvy consumers that prefer sharing services.

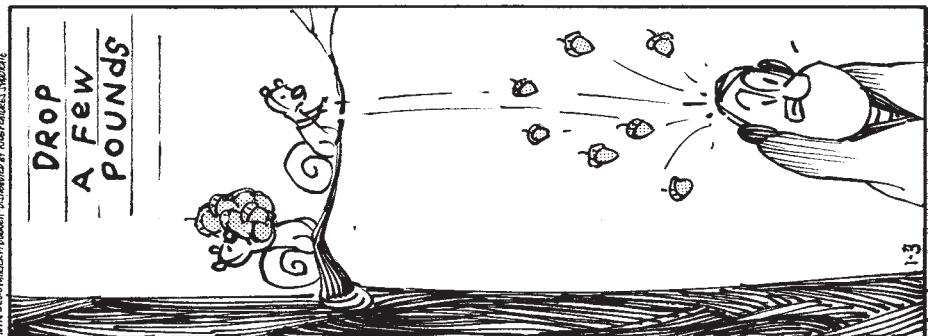
Zipcar parks cars throughout cities and college campuses, which allows renters to avoid waiting in lines at traditional car rental counters. Some areas provide reserved parking for the cars, which can be located online or through the companies' smartphone applications. That technology was attractive to Avis, which hopes to expand Zipcar's vast technological capabilities to its own business. The car-sharing companies pay for fuel and insurance, costs not included in standard car rentals. Although the hourly rental options are quicker and cheaper than renting a car by the day, Zipcar and other car-sharing services are generally more expensive for rentals longer than 24 hours.

To join Zipcar, members pay a \$25 application fee and \$50 a year. Rates run from \$7.50 an hour and include gas, insurance and 180 miles (290 kilometers) a day.

The acquisition will help Avis better compete with Enterprise and Hertz, which have their own smaller car-sharing services. And having access to Avis' fleet of cars will help Zipcar meet high demand on weekends when most people take a trip to the grocery store or run other errands. Avis estimates it will save about \$50 to \$70 million a year through combining the two businesses into one.

Avis Budget Group Inc. will pay \$12.25 per share, which is a 49 percent premium to Zipcar's closing price on Friday. The stock lost more than half its value in early 2012 year as its results and outlook spooked Wall Street. But late last year, the stock began to recover as the company saw growth in members and revenue. And on Wednesday, the stock soared 48 percent to \$12.19. The boards of both companies unanimously approved the buyout. □

Mutts



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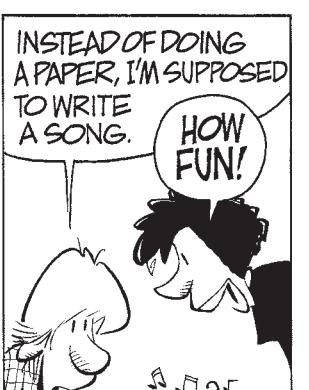
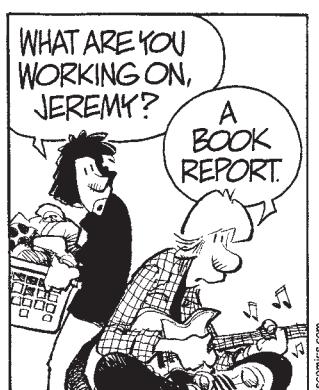
Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

3	1		6								
9		5	9	3						2	
7	2	3							5		
	4								9		
	9		6	3					1		
8		9	5	4						7	
		5			7				3		

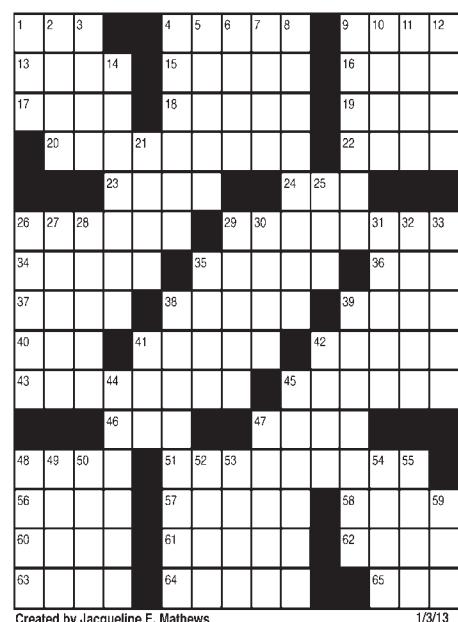
Difficulty Level ★★★

1/03

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

9	8	3	7	4	5	6	2	1			
4	5	6	2	1	3	7	9	8			
2	7	1	8	6	9	5	3	4			
3	9	8	4	2	6	1	7	5			
1	4	2	5	7	8	3	6	9			
7	6	5	3	9	1	8	4	2			
6	2	7	1	8	4	9	5	3			
8	3	4	9	5	7	2	1	6			
5	1	9	6	3	2	4	8	7			

Yesterday's puzzle answer



ACROSS

- 1 Desert fruit
- 4 Monsters
- 9 Upper limits
- 13 Cain's victim
- 15 Piece of garlic
- 16 Zone
- 17 Eat
- 18 Heavy volumes
- 19 Male deer
- 20 Mariners
- 22 Bit of land in the ocean
- 23 Dark blue
- 24 Actor — McKellen
- 26 Suitcase
- 29 Pops the question
- 34 Happening
- 35 Keel over
- 36 Tit for —
- 37 Piece of jewelry
- 38 Plays miniature golf
- 39 Gerbil's home
- 40 Papa
- 41 Migratory birds of Canada
- 42 Fairy tale
- 43 In a crazy way
- 45 Found a new purpose for
- 46 Piece of china
- 47 — and pepper
- 48 Stylish
- 51 Meanness
- 56 Seldom seen
- 57 Possessed
- 58 Unprocessed metals
- 60 Upon
- 61 Depart
- 62 African river
- 63 — over; stooped
- 64 Lawn trimmer
- 65 Make a choice

Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

1/3/13

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

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1/3/13

41 African antelope	49 Detest
50 Press, as clothing	52 Collapsed
42 Wading bird	44 Take; agree to
43 Spirited horse	45 Football player from Oakland
44 Gas or coal	47 Allen or Jobs
45 Tiny opening to spy through	48 Grouchy person
46 "Old —", flag of the U.S.A.	49 Sharp shrill cry
47 Carefulness	50 — up; arrange

MTV comes to West Virginia

TRIP GABRIEL

© 2013 New York Times

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – Even though it has yet to be broadcast, a reality TV series set in this corner of Appalachia has created a stir for its portrait of young people prone to fighting, swearing, careening in all-terrain vehicles and wallowing, scantily clad, in the mud. The series, "Buckwild," will fill the MTV slot vacated by "Jersey Shore." Like that series, the new show has aroused anger over what some consider the exploitation of broad cultural stereotypes.

"It doesn't help the lousy reputation we already have," said Greg Samms, 31, a dishwasher on a break at the Charleston Town Center Mall. "You go west of Ohio, west of Kentucky – people think we're hillbillies." Kent Carper, the president of the Kanawha County Commission here, said dryly, "Some folks in West Virginia wear shoes, believe it or not."

Sen. Joe Manchin III, D-W. Va., labeled the show a "travesty" and called on MTV to cancel it. "This show plays to ugly, inaccurate stereotypes about the people of West Virginia," Manchin wrote in a letter last month to Stephen K. Friedman, MTV's president. The tone of "Buckwild" is set by the saucy drawl of a cast member that is heard in the trailer released by MTV. "West Vir-

ginia is a place founded on freedom. For me and my friends, that means the freedom to do whatever we want," she says, adding



Ashley Somerville with her boyfriend, Matt Dolin, in Sissonville, W.Va., where MTV's "Buckwild" is set, Dec. 29, 2012. Like "Jersey Shore," whose slot it is filling, "Buckwild" is prompting anger over what some consider the exploitation of stereotypes.

(Lexey Swall/The New York Times)

an expletive. The trailer cuts to shots of a young woman throwing a drink can at another's face, a young man running nude, and a fiery explosion. There are crude stunts involving earthmoving equipment, body licking and necking. The series is set to begin Thursday at

10 p.m. To its creators, the show is a good-natured romp by exuberant young people. "The show lets them do their thing, which

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Singer Bobby Womack diagnosed with Alzheimer's

NEW YORK (AP) — Singer Bobby Womack has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame member told the BBC in a recent interview the diagnosis came after he began having difficulty remembering his songs and the names of people he's worked with. A spokeswoman did not immediately reply to a message left by The Associated Press. The soul singer has cut a wide path through the music business as a performer and songwriter in his 50-year career. He recently launched another act with "The Bravest Man in the Universe," the Damon Albarn-produced comeback album that made several best-of lists. Alzheimer's is a degenerative brain disease characterized by memory loss. It's the latest health problem for the 68-year-old singer, who's also been fighting cancer and other maladies. □



This June 22, 2012 file photo shows musician Bobby Womack in Los Angeles. Associated Press



Jon Stewart to host Grammy's MusiCares tribute

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Jon Stewart is hosting the MusiCares salute to Bruce Springsteen.

The Recording Academy also announced Wednesday that Elton John, Neil Young, Mumford & Sons, Sting, Mavis Staples and Kenny Chesney will be among more than a dozen performers who will help pay tribute to Springsteen during the Feb. 8 benefit concert, held in Los Angeles two days before the Grammy Awards.

Springsteen is MusiCare's person of the year, an award given to a performer who is notable both artistically and philanthropically. The sold-out concert will benefit MusiCare's emergency financial assistance and addiction recovery programs.

Other performers scheduled to appear include



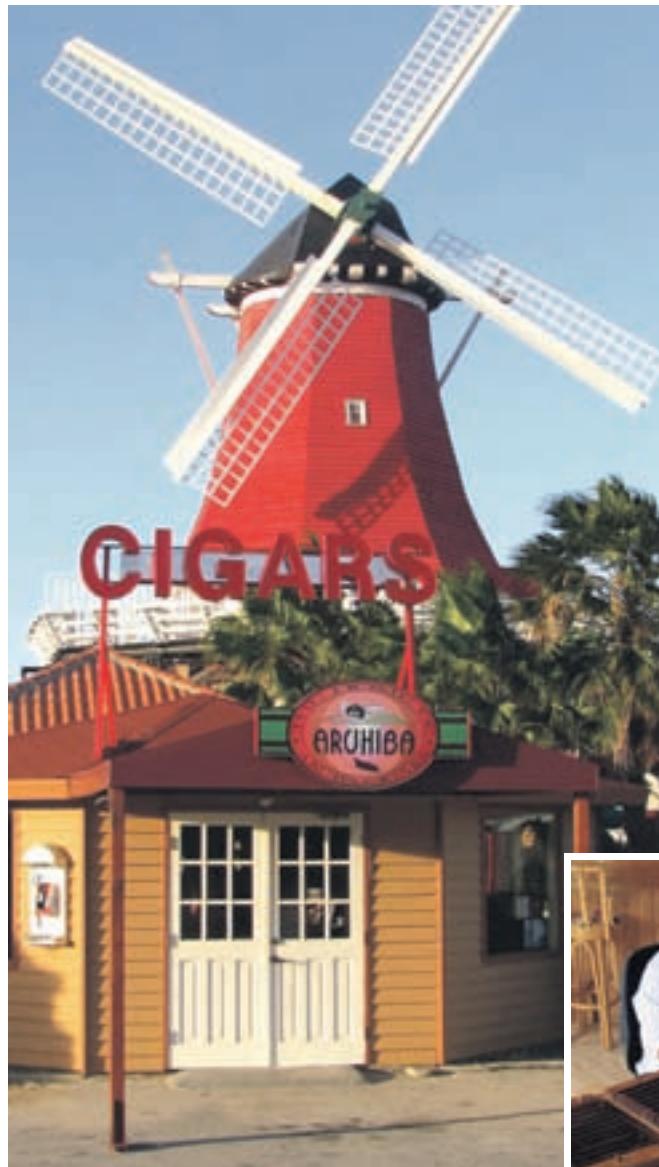
This Dec. 12, 2012 file image originally released by Starpix shows Bruce Springsteen performing at the 12-12-12 The Concert for Sandy Relief at Madison Square Garden in New York. Associated Press

Juanes, Tim McGraw and Faith Hill, Jackson Browne and Alabama Shakes.

Stewart is the host of Comedy Central's "The Daily Show With Jon Stewart." □

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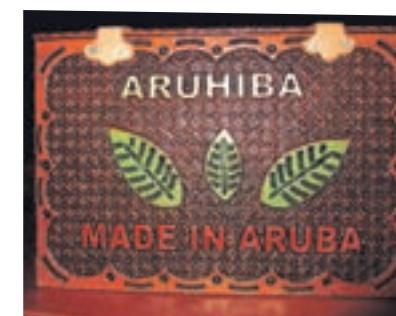
ORANJESTAD- Benjamin Petrocchi, a true native Aruban started the newest export product of Aruba, locally produced hand rolled cigars called "Aruhiba". These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba. Petrocchi always had an interest in the cigar business and has also sold Premium Cuban Cigars, and now he is growing his own tobacco crops. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba, he started his own production and cultivation of Aruhiba

Cigars in Aruba. The whole process took him 10 years to perfect. Petrocchi's dedication to the cigars is important for the moulding and process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. Their handmade cigar box is specially designed with their "Aruhiba" logo. Petrocchi considers Aruhiba as a promotion for Aruba through its fine cigars. The company sells Aruhiba to the international markets as well. Visit their retail store

located in front of the Historic Dutch Windmill in front of the Westin Resort, with any purchase of \$20 and up you receive a free "Aruhiba" cigar or ask for their gift box of 5 cigars get 1 FREE for only \$37. They open from Monday to Saturday from 9 am till 6:30 pm and on Sundays from 9 am to 1 pm. Aruhiba cigars are now available at the gift stores in your resort



and at well-known cigar stores. For their complete selection and attractive box prices visit their retail store. Tours are also available at their Tobacco farm where their cigars are grown and rolled.



For a group or private tour, call 586 0347 - 593 6177 or send them an email at aruhibacigars@gmail.com

Hollywood faces fracking in 'Promised Land'

MICHAEL RUBINKAM

Associated Press

ALLENTOWN, Pa. (AP) —

The new movie "Promised Land" digs into the fierce national debate over fracking, the technique that's generated a boom in U.S. natural gas production while also stoking controversy over its possible impact on the environment and human health.

Written by and starring Matt Damon and John Krasinski, the film comes at an opportune time for a big-screen exploration of the issues surrounding the shale gas revolution, with cheap natural gas transforming the nation's energy landscape and "fracking" now a household word.

But viewers shouldn't necessarily expect a realistic treatment of drilling and fracking. It's not that kind of film.

EDITOR'S NOTE — The author, Michael Rubinkam, covers the fracking industry in Pennsylvania for The Associated Press. With "Promised Land" opening nationwide on Friday, he offers this view from the ground.

Lending an air of authenticity, the movie was shot in Pennsylvania, where thousands of wells have been drilled and fracked in recent years as industry heavyweights pull huge volumes of gas from the sprawling Marcellus Shale, a rock formation deep below the surface of the Earth.

But "Promised Land" spends little time explaining how energy companies actually go about pulling natural gas out of the ground, and what little explanation the movie does provide is simply not very accurate.

The Focus Features release instead concentrates on another aspect of the drilling boom — the battle for hearts and minds as gas companies seek to lease land for drilling while environmentalists warn of the perils of punching a bunch of holes in the ground. Bewildered landowners, meanwhile, are left to sort



This undated publicity film image provided by Focus Features shows Matt Damon starring as Steve Butler in Gus Van Sant's contemporary drama, "Promised Land," a Focus Features release.

Associated Press

out the competing claims and counterclaims.

It's potentially fertile territory. In real life, drilling companies injected millions of dollars into moribund local economies, transforming sleepy villages in Pennsylvania and other states into boomtowns almost overnight. But the industry also sowed division, pitting

neighbor against neighbor as some residents complained of ruined water wells and other environmental degradation. Many others, judging by recent public opinion surveys, heralded the prosperity that drilling creates and the abundant homegrown energy it produces.

Even here, though, the

movie seeks to entertain more than enlighten, with an implausible plot twist undermining what could have been a realistic portrayal of life as it is really lived in the gas fields.

"Promised Land" follows Steve Butler (Damon), a gas company salesman who shows up in an economically struggling small

town in Pennsylvania that happens to sit atop a vast reserve of gas. His task: To get residents to sign on the dotted line, promising them they'll become instant millionaires once the gas starts flowing from the shale underneath their land. Standing in his way is Dustin Noble (Krasinski), an environmental activist determined to convince townsfolk they don't want what the driller is selling.

Damon's character repeatedly points out that drilling has brought new life to struggling towns, calls U.S. reliance on foreign sources of energy "insane," and defends fracking as a technology with a proven track record of safety. And he seems to believe it himself, at least initially.

But the film leaves little doubt as to where its sympathies lie.

"Nobody's going to be disingenuous here. If you were expecting a pro-fracking movie from Matt Damon, you were probably living in an alternate universe," Focus Features CEO James Schamus said with a laugh. But he insisted that "Promised Land" ultimately is not a movie about a highly technical process in which drillers use water, sand and chemicals to break apart gas-bearing shale rock — and it should not be judged by that standard.

"The filmmakers didn't necessarily set out to make, nor did they make, some kind of civics lesson or propaganda movie about fracking," Schamus said.

Rather, he said, the movie is a Frank Capra-style yarn about "working-class identity, about aspiration, about money and what it does to you," with fracking as the vehicle that propels the story and a healthy dose of corporate villainy. Krasinski says he and Damon tried to avoid too much of a political message. "We really wanted to tell a story about community, about these small towns that are going through very real situations right now, especially with the economic situation as it is," he told the AP. □

'Tennessee Waltz' singer Patti Page dies



In this Sept. 26, 2009 file photo, singer Patti Page performs the Tennessee Waltz during halftime of a NCAA college football game Tennessee and Ohio in Knoxville, Tenn. Page, who made "Tennessee Waltz" the third best-selling recording ever, has died. She was 85.

Associated Press

CHRIS TALBOTT

AP Music Writer

NASHVILLE, Tennessee

(AP) — Patti Page, the "Singing Rage" who stumbled across "Ten-

nessee Waltz" and made it one of the best-selling recordings ever, has died. She was 85. Page died on New Year's Day in Encinitas, California, according to publicist Schatzi Hageman. Page was the top-selling female singer of the 1950s with more than 100 million records sold. Her most enduring songs remain "Tennessee Waltz," one of two songs the state of Tennessee has officially adopted, and "(How Much Is That) Doggie in the Window." "I was a kid from Oklahoma who never wanted to be a singer, but was told I could sing," she said in a 1999 interview. "And things snowballed." She created a distinctive sound for the music industry in 1947 by overdubbing her own voice when she didn't have enough money to hire backup singers

for the single, "Confess." She went on to score 15 gold records and three gold albums with 24 songs in the top 10, including four that reached No. 1.

She was popular in pop music and country and became the first singer to have television programs on all three major networks, including "The Patti Page Show" on ABC.

In 1999, after 51 years of performing, Page won her first Grammy for traditional pop vocal performance for "Live at Carnegie Hall — The 50th Anniversary Concert." Page was planning to attend a special ceremony on Feb. 9 in Los Angeles where she was to receive a lifetime achievement award from The Recording Academy. Page was born Nov. 8, 1927, as Clara Ann Fowler in Claremore, Oklahoma. □

At coffee training camp, creating the perfect cup

MATT RICHTEL

© 2013 New York Times

SAN FRANCISCO — Tristan Walach has a tattoo of the famous Las Vegas welcome sign on his neck. He goes by the name Ant. He teaches people how to make coffee, professionally.

I have come to learn from him.

"People like you are the best to train," he says, sizing me up. "You don't have bad habits or pre-

Sure, Ant, you can up my coffee game, and then I'll spend three days at Camp Let's Make Oatmeal.

And, hey, I'm not precisely a blank slate. Without any training, I brew a very solid morning latte. And it's superior to Starbucks, I brag to my wife, using only a \$100 espresso maker and beans from a local cafe.

"How hard can coffee be? It's an attitude we're constantly encountering," said Ellie Matuszak, director of

There is also a slide titled "The Origin Myth." It's folklore, a big-bang theory of the discovery of coffee by a goat herder in Ethiopia. Then it's time to commence cupping.

This entails smelling the contents of the white cups — beans from Kenya, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, El Salvador and Guatemala. I cannot detect much difference. Ant then introduces me to La Marzocco Linea, an espresso maker that runs

the filter.

I'm supposed to give the coffee a little sift to even it out, then pack it down with the tamper. Ant shows me how to create about 35 pounds of pressure, a give-or-take amount achieved by bending my knees for leverage and pushing on the tamper until the coffee pushes back.

This step is crucial, Ant says, because otherwise water flows unevenly through the coffee, creating unwanted channels. I press another button, to run the water through the coffee. We press a timer to make sure I leave the water flowing for 25 seconds. Brown and tan espresso flows into the demitasse, which Ant calls the "vessel."

Ant sips. "It's not terribly offensive."

Ant offers wisdom: "The difference between a good barista and a great one is the great barista has the courage to toss a shot." We toss my amoebas in the sink. I have a second chance coming. I tell Ant that I'm getting more training with Chris Baca at Verve, a cafe and roaster in Santa Cruz. His eyes light up.

"He's great! I trained with him," he says.

But first, I try to put some of my training to work at home the next morning. I throw out the first three shots. Something is wrong. I was making excellent espresso just the day before. I have actually gotten worse. Baca, 32, planned to be a high school history teacher. But he dropped out of col-

lege and took a job at a cafe in Modesto. He developed a love affair with coffee, moved to San Francisco to work for a trendy cafe called Ritual, then started competing in 2006. In 2010, he finished second out of 50 competitors in the U.S. Barista Championship. In the freestyle competition, he made a creme anglaise espresso drink, cherry infused with a citrus garnish.

"I know, this all seems like 'Best in Show,'" says Ryan O'Donovan, an owner of Verve, referring to the faux documentary about dog shows. "It seems ridiculous. We're trying to make it less ridiculous."

Reality check: I'm trying to make it through chaotic mornings at home with a clamoring family. O'Donovan is amused. Why, he asks, would I make espresso in the morning, let alone latte?

"I make drip coffee," O'Donovan explains. Baca does, too. That's because making a good espresso requires preparation and cleanup. Even when it all goes right, it takes time. Like making a good meal.

"Coffee isn't just coffee," O'Donovan says.

It's "just like anything else," Baca chimes in. I instantly take his meaning: Coffee — what I assumed was just a simple, necessary thing to start my day — is something more than that. It may not require certification but it does require more attention than I realized.

With my cram session at an end, O'Donovan leaves me with a laugh and a warning: "You're heading down the rabbit hole."

In the ensuing days, I start using the timer on the microwave to make sure I'm pulling my espresso shots for 25 seconds. I troll the Internet for counsel on what might be a next-step espresso maker. But even with my old gear and a bit of leftover coffee from Sightglass, my shots have gotten discernibly better, and occasionally good.

I place an order for coffee from Verve. □



Tristan Walach, who goes by the name Ant and is the director of education at Sightglass, during a coffee training session, in San Francisco. (Jim Wilson/The New York Times)

conceived notions. You're a blank slate."

We're at Sightglass, a cafe near downtown San Francisco with a huge coffee roaster near the front door. But Ant and I are tucked away upstairs, cordoned behind a chain and a sign: "Training in Session."

Such training centers are increasingly common, and not just at cafes: There are certification classes for baristas and even Camp Pull A-Shot, a four-day, three-night event. And there are also a growing number of regional and national "throwdowns" to find the most technically proficient, graceful makers of the best-tasting coffee drinks.

Am I skeptical? Well, making coffee, even espresso, roughly entails pouring or pushing water through coffee. Sometimes by flicking a switch or pushing a button.

professional development for the Specialty Coffee Association of America, a trade group with thousands of company members and 1,200 people in its growing Barista Guild.

Ant, 34, whose title is director of education, says coffee requires a deft touch.

"It's the most complicated beverage we consume," he said.

The training center at Sightglass includes a counter with several grinders, an industrial-strength espresso machine, a scale, coffee tampers and other paraphernalia. On a nearby island of reclaimed blond wood are 10 handleless cups, organized in five pairs, each half full of light-brown beans.

But first, we are going to watch Ant's PowerPoint presentation about where the best beans come from and how they are picked.

\$8,000 to \$10,000. (The really expensive machines, La Marzocco Strada and the Slayer, are downstairs for the baristas.) To its left is a \$1,500 Mazzer Major grinder. On top is a button. My job is to push that button, dispensing precisely 19.5 grams of coffee into



Chris Baca's tulip pattern from steamed milk during a coffee training session at Verve in Santa Cruz, Calif. Coffee-making training centers are increasingly common, and not just at cafes, offering certification classes for baristas.

(Jim Wilson/The New York Times)